CONSIDERING DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND ITS EFFECTS ON TEACHER LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Justin M. Finney

ACCEPTANCE

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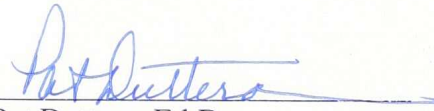Health Professions, Columbus State University.

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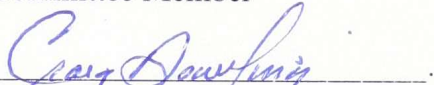Education concurs.

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ABSTRACT

CONSIDERING DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND ITS EFFECTS ON TEACHER
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

By

Justin M. Finney

This dissertation examined the construct of distributed leadership in schools. This work presents the results of a theory building study investigating the following research questions: (a) In schools, is there a relationship between distributed leadership practices and increased student achievement? (b) How does distributed leadership shape and inform the experiences, practices, and agency of teachers and school administrators within a school that espouses a distributed paradigm with regard to its leadership and management practices? These questions were considered through a longitudinal mixed methods study of the leadership practices at Grantham Middle School and Bishop Elementary. The findings suggest that distributed leadership practices do enhance the agency of teachers within the leadership structures of schools. Likewise the findings suggest that teaching and learning are enhanced at schools that employ distributed leadership practices. Finally, findings in this study reveal that student achievement did improve at each participant school. Chapter 5 presents an examination of the implications of this study and new images of distributed leadership in schools.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CONSIDERING DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND ITS EFFECTS ON TEACHER
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

By

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A Dissertation

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

The demands and expectations placed on United States public schools have dramatically increased in the first decade of the 21st Century. Some of the initiatives that have contributed significantly to the increased demands placed on US schools include the federal mandates of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), as well as numerous comprehensive school reform movements that encompass state-imposed educational reform initiatives such as standards based curriculums, high stakes assessment programs, and complicated response to intervention protocols. These so called school reform and accountability initiatives have forced most US schools to undergo marked organizational and systemic changes; structurally evolving and transforming them into organizations that are extremely complex. In turn, these structural transformations have radically challenged, tested, and seemingly blurred the boundaries and roles of leaders and followers within the traditional leadership frameworks in US schools. Doubtless, this ever evolving situation has been problematic for US schools and their staffs. Like never before, school administrators and teachers are struggling to manage the demands of their complex and ever evolving school systems. Equally so, they are struggling to make sense of new and emerging leadership challenges and frameworks, while at the same time striving toward school improvement and increased student achievement. Though traditional leadership roles and frameworks are being challenged in US schools, a familiar scenario that continues to play out in countless school systems across the United States, is that of the charismatic school leader (usually a principal), who is called upon and almost singly

charged with the improvement and sustained success of these highly complex organizations that are the typical US school. Within the notion of traditional school leadership frameworks, principals are the individuals most likely to be responsible for developing and articulating the school vision to the staff, students, and the community. Likewise, within traditional school leadership frameworks it is the principal who most often is responsible for leading the development and implementation of curricula and accompanying comprehensive assessment programs. Furthermore, within traditional educational leadership frameworks it is the principal who is too often expected to establish and sustain most, if not all, of the organizational routines and structures that contribute to a positive school culture and sustained student achievement. In short, until recently it has too often been the misguided notion that everything in a school rises or falls on the leadership and actions of a single person, usually the principal.

Doubtless, it is problematic and no longer reasonable to expect that a single school leader, such as a principal, can be the sole person responsible for meeting all of the needs and challenges of an organization as complex as a typical US school. Equally problematic is that this all too common scenario of the heroic leader can lead to the development of rigid hierarchal leadership structures in schools, which disempower teachers and other constituents of the school. Researchers such as Spillane (2006, p. 2) assert that we must find a departure from what he refers to as the "heroics of leadership." That is to say, when examining school leadership practice we must not fixate on the actions of the "heroic leader," but we must also closely examine and consider the actions of all leaders in the school, the followers, and their collective social interactions. In this same spirit, Angelle (2010) suggests that we must engage in and "embrace a re-thinking

of leadership practice as a collective effort." In other words, we must consider

organizational frameworks in which leadership activities are more distributed across the

constellation of stakeholders in a school. This consideration of distributed leadership

frameworks is contingent upon understanding how school administrators and teachers

experience situational and social interactions and contexts within distributed leadership

frameworks.

<div align="center">The Emergence of Distributed Leadership</div>

Clearly we have a leadership crisis within the traditional leadership frameworks

of schools. McBeth (2008) asserts that "we must give serious consideration to the fact

that existing theories, concepts, and constructs of leadership have largely failed to deliver

instructional improvement" (p. 8) at desired levels. The prevailing philosophies and

models of leadership, focused primarily on the central and lone "instructional leader,"

have not proven to be successful in bringing about sustained positive school and

classroom change. Thus, school leadership, in the traditional sense, must be questioned,

challenged and critiqued. The emergence of the distributed leadership perspective holds

promise in being part of that the answer to this school leadership crisis (McBeth, 2008)

That distributed leadership holds such promise in helping to solve traditional leadership

problems in schools, has helped fuel its emergence in recent years.

In response to the realities of school leadership challenges as described above,

many researchers (Gronn, 2009; Harris, 2008, 2009; Leithwood, Mascall, & Strauss,

2009; McBeth, 2008; Spillane, 2006; and Spillane & Diamond, 2007) have all

contributed significantly to increased interest in the construct that is distributed

leadership. These researchers all theorize and suggest that in order to meet and solve

many of the challenges faced by schools as they evolve and increase in complexity, distributed leadership frameworks and perspectives must be examined and considered. As a result, the phenomenon of distributed leadership has conspicuously emerged at the forefront of recent school leadership and school improvement literature.

Unlike the canon of leadership research and commentary that focuses on the actions of individual leaders and their roles within organizations, distributed leadership research focuses on and is situated in the "interactions of leaders, followers, and their situations; each element being essential for leadership practice" (Spillane, 2006, p. 12). Diamond, as referenced in an interview by Anderson (2007), emphasizes that distributed leadership is not so much a type of leadership, but more of a framework to understand all leadership practice and actions. Diamond goes on to explain that distributed leadership is not something we do, but rather an examination and understanding of how leadership practice is manifested in and brought about through the interactions among school leaders, followers, and their situations. In other words, "distributed leadership is not simply an examination of *what* leaders do to distribute work activities through delegation of tasks and responsibility, but also an understanding of *how* leadership practice creates these tasks in the day-to-day work of schools" (Spillane, 2006, p. 5).

There are several theoretical perspectives that have also contributed to the emergence of distributed leadership. I will briefly describe four such theoretical perspectives that have been instrumental in influencing and supporting the emergence of, and interest in, leadership distribution. The four theoretical perspectives to be outlined are organizational learning theory, distributed cognition, complexity science, and high involvement leadership research.

Central to organizational learning theory, is the notion that organizations can learn outside of the knowledge and actions individuals within the organization. That is to say that organizations can become more intelligent than that of any one of its many members. Senge (1990) outlines how organizations in the midst of rapid change must become flexible, adaptive, and more productive in order to survive. To do this, Senge says, organizations must develop a capacity to learn. Organizations that continuously create capacity essentially create their own futures. For this to be accomplished requires a collective paradigm shift on the part of the organizations' members. When organizational learning theory is applied in relation to distributed leadership, it is assumed that distributed leadership will lead to increased organizational capacity, through implied interactions and coordinated planning of organizational members (Leithwood, Mascall, & Strauss, 2009).

Theories associated with distributed cognition are closely related to those of organizational learning theory. Whereas organizational learning theory focuses on the building of organizational capacity through combined actions and knowledge of individuals within an organization, distributed cognition focuses on organizational capacity as influenced by the coordination of individuals in an organization, artifacts, and the environment. According to distributed cognition theories, organizations build capacity not so much through organizational learning, but rather learning how to bring available and underutilized resources (technology and artifacts) to bear in new situations. When applied to distributed leadership in schools, distributed cognition frameworks help us better understand how leaders and followers in schools function within situations, according to available resources and material conditions.

Complexity science, which has its origins in the physical sciences, has been a useful tool for unpacking and understanding the distributed leadership construct. Simply stated, complexity science is the study of complex systems. Complex systems are systems that that have many parts that interact to produce complex systemic behaviors that are not easily explained in relation to the behaviors of the individual constituents of an organization. Examples of complex systems include ecosystems, businesses, IT networks, brains, and of course schools.

Through complexity science, organizations and systems can be examined as they move between periods of stability and instability. In order to negotiate these fluctuating patterns, systems and organizations demonstrate adaptability. That is to say that as a system or organization approaches chaos through increased complexities, the group is influenced to take corrective actions or to develop creative solutions to problems in order to avoid chaos and to restore equilibrium. Waldrop (1992) explains how organizations on the "edge of chaos" attempt to restore order through interdependent relationships between organizational participants, in which information is exchanged, actions are undertaken, and feedback is acted upon. These activities are not centralized but are formed and reformed interdependently among organization members in any given situation.

One can see how complexity science allows us to examine organizations and the complex networks and relationships from a distributed perspective. The focus of complexity science on the interconnectedness of organizations and groups makes distribution of leadership more likely. Through greater distribution of informal and formal leadership activities, thoughtful consideration must be taken in organizations, with

regard to leaders, followers, situations, and how the combination of the three influence

outcomes and practices.

Perhaps the line of research that is most closely aligned with distributed

leadership and has had the most influence in fueling the emergence of distributed

leadership is the research associated with high involvement leadership, or participative

leadership. Participative leadership is a leadership style in which a formal leader

functions as a facilitator, allowing group members to participate in organizational goal

setting and the implementation of strategies to accomplish set goals. Benefits of this type

of leadership include expansion of possibilities for the organizations, as well as

developing leaders within the organization that will be of benefit to the organization at

later dates. Through participative leadership, central leaders are able to release

organizational challenges to be addressed by creative and well equipped group members.

The idea is that when people are seen as valuable to an organization, and when they are

equipped to meet organizational challenges, there is a synergistic effect that takes place,

as the creative and problem solving possibilities of motivated and well equipped group

members is greater than that of a lone and centralized formal leader. Therefore, many of

the positive outcomes of participative leadership styles can also be anticipated and

claimed within distributed leadership perspectives and styles.

The Problem

We know, from even a cursory glance at the literature on distributed leadership

that an abundance of theoretical research exists on the topic. Much of the theoretical

literature, with a few notable exceptions, reveals a favor for distributed leadership as the

new norm in school leadership and management. Within the discourse of school

leadership, distributed leadership means many things to many people. The different interpretations of the concept have brought about varied uses and applications in schools. This can be problematic since educational organizations are so very susceptible to adopting quick fix reform models that are under-researched and often prove to be ineffective. Spillane and Diamond (2007) frame the distributed leadership dilemma nicely in their insightful observation that "some use it as though it were a blueprint or recipe for effective school leadership—yet another holy grail" (p. 2).

I argue that theoretical knowledge about the construct of distributed leadership does little good unless it translates into effective normative practices in schools. Hence, distributed leadership does little good for schools unless it enhances the routine leadership and instructional practices in schools that improve teaching and learning. While wide acceptance of distributed leadership increases and the theoretical literature on distributed leadership abounds, empirical evidence of how distributed leadership practices improve teaching and learning is insufficient. Therefore, if distributed leadership is to be heralded as the norm in school leadership and management, we are pressed to examine and investigate, more closely, distributed leadership's influence on student achievement and how it shapes and informs the experiences, practices, and agency of teachers and school administrators.

Statement of the Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this dissertation was to determine if and to what extent distributed leadership frameworks contribute to increased student achievement, and to determine how distributed leadership practices shape and inform the experiences and practices of teachers and administrators at a school in which distributed leadership practices are

employed. The intent was to shed empirical light on the construct of distributed leadership by focusing my inquiry through two guiding questions:

1. Is there a relationship between distributed leadership practices and perspectives in schools and increased student achievement?

2. How does distributed leadership shape and inform the experiences, practices, and agency of teachers and school administrators within a school that espouses a distributed paradigm with regard to its leadership and management practices?

To answer these two guiding research questions, I examined the leadership practices of two schools; one middle school and one elementary school. In these two schools distributed leadership practices were seemingly emphasized and practiced regularly, though admittedly, the two schools were at different stages with regard to the application of distributed leadership practices. In the end, it was my intent to draw upon organizational theory to analyze and discuss new images of distributed leadership and the potential that this construct may or may not hold in bringing about real school improvement. Of pressing importance to this discussion was the analysis and consideration of the implications of distributed leadership practices and perspectives on the organizational structures, collaborative relationships, and social interactions within schools.

Methods and Theoretical Frameworks

With the aim of answering the research questions above, an exploratory mixed methods design that incorporated the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data was employed. Quantitatively, descriptive survey research approaches in the form of questionnaires and interviews were employed. Additionally, I examined

various student performance data using inferential statistical analyses. Both of these

quantitative approaches were instrumental in my inquiry to determine if distributed

leadership contributed to increased student achievement at the participant schools.

In order to reveal, describe, and bring to the fore the experiences and perceptions

of teachers and administrators regarding the construct of distributed leadership as

practiced in the participant schools, case study, narrative, and historical research

methodologies were used. Data collection methods used in the collection of qualitative

data included participant observation, non-participant observation, structured and

unstructured interviews, questionnaires, and archival documents.

Underlying Assumptions

There are several underlying assumptions that undergirded and implicated this

study. The first assumption was that leadership practices in schools directly and indirectly

affect teaching and learning in schools. It was also assumed that leadership constructs and

practices in schools can be identified and defined, and that their effects on student

achievement can be determined using surveys and descriptive statistical analysis,

combined with inferential statistical analysis of student performance data. Finally, it was

assumed that leadership practices in schools shape the experiences, perceptions,

interactions, and agency of teachers and school administrators; ultimately contributing to

the degree of success of a school. Consequently, the experiences, perceptions,

interactions, and agency of these stakeholders can be revealed and described through

qualitative methods, and can be considered to be reflective of the degree to which the

leadership practices in schools are effective.

Delimitations and Limitations

There were certainly delimitations and limitations to this study. The first noted

delimitation to this study was that this analysis was limited to only two schools. The

participant middle school and its staff claimed to adhere to and regularly practice

distributed leadership in the daily operations and routines of their school. The leadership

practices of only this one middle school were examined due to the fact that other middle

schools that were contacted for this study declined to participate. The second

delimitation is that only one elementary school accepted the invitation to participate in

this study. Though the staff of the participant elementary school claimed to have accepted

and embraced the promise of school improvement through the application of distributed

leadership practices, their application of these practices were in the very initial stages.

Admittedly, the definition, interpretation, and implementation of distributed leadership

can dramatically vary between schools. Likewise, organizational structures, roles and

responsibilities of staff, and school culture can also vary dramatically between schools.

Therefore, a broad generalization of the results of this study to a larger population will be

problematic.

A limitation of this mixed methods study was that survey response may be low. In

structured and unstructured interviews of teachers and administrators, interviewees might

not have been completely forthcoming in their comments and opinions. Also, knowing

that their leadership practices were being observed and analyzed, participant staff

members might have changed their normal behaviors and interactions due to the

Hawthorne effect. Finally, I relied upon statistical data to determine if there was a

relationship between distributed leadership practices and student achievement. This

statistical data analysis would only reveal a positive or negative relationship in the data. It did not necessarily determine cause and effect. It is important to note, that when examining distributed leadership as an independent variable, one must consider the effects of other associated variables at the schools, and how these variables might affect the dependent variable of student performance. For example, might the effects of distributed leadership practices on student achievement at the participant schools have been a result of the size, demographics, location, culture, or operational structures of the school, or the recent adoption of distributed leadership practices? Having discussed the limitations of this study, doubtless a replicated study, in which these methods remain constant, could yield very different results if used to analyze the actions and data of different participants.

<div align="center">Significance</div>

The importance and significance of this study does not lie in the broad generalizations of the results to larger populations in order to determine and develop a single fix all model or recipe for school improvement through distributed leadership. No, the significance of this study is that it will contribute concrete data and commentary to the ongoing conversations and scholarly debates on distributed leadership. It is desired that through the ongoing conversations about leadership practices in schools, new ideas and conversations about leadership practice will emerge, directly contributing to authentic school improvement. This study did not seek to provide a recipe for success that will constrict school leaders within one leadership model, but rather it sought to contribute to an array of practical and flexible leadership frameworks that give embattled educational leaders more options and opportunities.

The significance of this study is situated directly in the contemporary environment of high stakes accountability in education reform. Swelling scrutiny and laser like focus on schools and school leaders to increase the performance of students, has left many school leaders grasping at any and all straws in an attempt to preserve and improve their schools, as well as to survive professionally in the contemporary high stakes accountability environment that is US public education. The construct of distributed leadership, opaque as it is as a leadership framework, is fast becoming one of the proverbial straws at which educational leaders and schools are grasping. Obviously, this widespread acceptance and proliferation of distributed leadership is due to its theoretical promise as a means to school improvement. While theoretically, distributed leadership has fast become one of the latest and greatest means to school improvement, an in depth and empirical analysis will contribute to and move beyond the existing theoretical narratives on distributed leadership. This empirical study will lend substance to the superficial and insufficient theoretical debates over the merits of distributed leadership and its influence on school improvement.

McBeth (2008) sums it up nicely when he states, "we are in a time of crisis [in education] and we know that effective leadership enhances student performance, so we need to buck up and face this challenge head on" (p. 3). Leithwood et al. (2004), as quoted by McBeth (2008), illustrate their claims as to the promise of distributed leadership by stating that, "we need new analytical or diagnostic tools that enable us to think about school leaders [and leadership] in a new way" (p.8). I agree whole heartedly with Leithwood et al. and McBeth. Nevertheless, as school leaders and education researchers we cannot simply and blindly accept the theoretic promises of distributed

leadership as THE path to realizing our desires for increased student performance. It is crucial that we closely examine and consider distributed leadership within this crisis, bringing together both theory and empirical evidence in an analysis of the overall promise and effectiveness of distributed leadership in schools; the ultimate goal being the emergence of leadership practices in schools that genuinely improve teaching, learning, and student performance.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature review aims to shed light on and to refine into a useable form, the diverse definitions and interpretations of the construct of distributed leadership within contemporary education. Embedded within the discourse that will situate and ground the nature and meaning of distributed leadership will be analysis and commentary on how distributed leadership perspectives in schools serve to shape the experiences and practices of educators in the teaching and learning processes, as well as distributed leadership's affect on student achievement. To many, the concept of distributed leadership is pragmatically interpreted as shared or democratic governance, or simply the delegation of work activities among and between leaders and followers of an organization. Within this pragmatic interpretation, distributed leadership is "frequently talked about as a cure-all for schools, a way that leadership ought to be carried out" (Spillane, 2006, p. 7) as a possible strategy for school improvement. To others, distributed leadership exists as a more complex theoretical perspective for better understanding the essence, meaning, and sources of leadership in schools. With so many ambiguous and competing interpretations of what distributed leadership is, Leithwood, Mascall, and Strauss (2009), as noted by Harris (2002), astutely state that "the definition and understanding of distributed leadership varies [widely] from the normative to the descriptive" (p. 1). My intent within this review is not to suggest or settle upon a normative definition of distributed leadership. Nor, will I remain completely within the theoretical realm when analyzing this seemingly elusive concept. In fact, in the spirit of Spillane and Diamond (2007), I will knowingly shift between the normative and theoretical stances, in order to use

distributed leadership as a conceptual lens, through which school leadership and school improvement might be investigated. By examining and applying the concept of distributed leadership in such a diverse manner, it is my hope that new ideas will be generated. Ideally, these new ideas will stimulate new conversations about leadership and school improvement. Through such fluid conversations and diverse ideas, I argue, is where meaning and improved practice emerge.

In order to better understand the construct of distributed leadership, its relationship to student achievement, and how it shapes the practices of educators as to teaching and learning in schools, I will analyze and examine relevant published literature in relation to several intersecting questions: (a) What are the various images and interpretations of the distributed leadership construct? (b) Why has the construct of distributed leadership become such a powerful image? (c) What empirical literature exists, and what does that literature report as to the effects of distributed leadership perspectives on student achievement and school improvement? (d) How does the construct of distributed leadership shape leadership and instructional practice in schools? (e) Finally, what are the critiques of the notion of distributed leadership as it pertains to school leadership and improvement?

Much literature exists with regard to the seemingly beneficial attributes of distribute leadership in schools. However, most of the existent published literature on distributed leadership is theoretical; one might even conclude that too much of the literature is suppositional and conjectural. Problematic is the lack of sufficient objective and observational research that analyzes and examines the effects of distributed leadership on student achievement and educator practices in schools. Equally concerning,

is the little amount of literature that exists to provide a clear and sufficient critique of the

distributed leadership construct.

Grounding the Theoretical Construct of Distributed Leadership

With regard to the construct of distributed leadership, many interpretations exist.

However, most of the varied interpretations of this leadership construct fall under the

theoretical umbrellas of two dominant camps. Spillane (2006) and Harris (2008) provide

commentary and critique of the first camp's interpretations of distributed leadership as

being interchangeable and synonymous with terms such as *collaborative leadership* (Clift

& Thurston, 1995; Rubin, 2009), *shared leadership* (Pearce & Conger, 2002), *co-

leadership* (Heenan & Bennis, 1999), *democratic leadership* (Kane, Patapan, & Hart,

2009), *and situational leadership* (Raelin, 2003). In short, the first camp typically

oversimplifies their analysis and interpretation of distributed leadership, as a catch all

term, meaning delegation of work activities and tasks in an organization, or how

leadership is shared.

The second camp, as characterized by the works of researchers such as Spillane,

Diamond, Harris, and McBeth, hold a distributed view of school leadership that

recognizes that school leadership no longer solely resides or originates from the

principal's office, from which work and tasks are delegated to others in the school.

According to researchers such as Spillane, Diamond, Harris, McBeth, and others, in

schools there are many leaders, many followers, and countless situations that shape and

define leaders, followers, and their many practices within schools. Within this distributed

perspective, school administrators and teachers can sometimes serve as leaders, while in

other situations they might serve as followers. Therefore, distributed leadership

perspectives press us to consider and acknowledge the contributions and roles of all individual players who contribute to the work in the schooling process in any given situation.

Spillane (2006) considers these synonymous interpretations of distributed leadership as wrong. Spillane (2006), as does Harris (2008), considers distributed leadership not a replica of the terms above, but rather a relative of the terms above. Spillane (2006) provides the following example: "While collaborative leadership is by definition distributed, all distributed leadership is not collaborative. Indeed a distributed perspective allows for leadership that can be more collaborative or less collaborative depending on the situation" (p. 23). For example, school administrators can work to implement strategies to improve teaching and student learning, while teachers might work to maintain the status quo. Administrators might work in one direction whereas the teachers might work in another. Spillane (2006) would say that this situation can be analyzed and understood from a distributed perspective, but the situation is definitely not collaborative.

With regard to democratic leadership, a distributed leadership perspective allows for leadership functions to be democratic or autocratic. While there are times when a school principal solicits feedback and input from teachers and staff on any number of issues, there are times when a school principal is required to solely make important decisions. The distributed leadership perspective is not defined in the autocratic or democratic decision making, but rather in the examination of how the leaders, followers, and situation function to shape the outcomes of decisions and also how they function together to shape the routine practices in the organization (Spillane, 2006). Therefore, if

in every organizational decision we consider the roles of leaders, the followers, and the situation, democratic leadership and autocratic leadership can both fit within the distributed leadership perspective.

Perhaps it is Harris (2008) that best captures the essence of the distributed leadership construct, when she introduces a web model to outline and clarify the notion of distributed leadership. At the center of Harris's web model is the idea that "leadership is not the preserve of an individual but results from multiple interactions at different points in the organization" (Harris, 2008, p. 33). In other words, in organizations as complex as schools, leadership becomes a complex web of interactions spread across many combinations of leaders, followers, and situations. Harris's leadership web model helps us move beyond the traditional understandings of school leadership as the actions solely of and by the principal and how they affect the organization, to understanding school leadership as a powerful organizational and relational force that shapes and shifts the practices of the school as different individuals emerge and serve as leaders in various capacities.

Harris (2008) emphasizes that the relational aspects of distributed leadership are paramount. Harris (2008) rightly points out that distributed leadership, in the relational sense, means that stakeholders in schools must be "attuned to and in touch with the intricate web of inter- and intra-relationships that influence the organization" (p. 34). Harris (2008) refers to Wenger (1998) when she concludes that it is not so much who initiates and carries out leadership activities in schools, but rather "the meaning and identities that are created when people work together" (p. 34). Harris's main point is that over time the needs of schools change. Therefore, the leadership needs of the

organization will also need to change. This inevitable change will most certainly change leadership roles within the organization. Distributed leadership should not do away with the formal leadership roles in the organization. Distributed leadership suggests that powerful relationships, both formal and informal, must be developed across the organization to meet increasing change effectively. In a school, for instance, it is no longer the principal in his or her formal leadership role that initiates every action, but rather the school principal becomes the conduit to distributed leadership practices in their schools. Formal leaders then "purposefully create the conditions for distributed leadership to happen and flourish" (Harris, 2008, p. 35).

Where Harris uses a web model to describe and situate the construct of distributed leadership, other researchers, the leader among them Spillane (McBeth 2008; Spillane, 2006, 2009; Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004), draw upon distributed cognition theories to undergird their conceptual frameworks of distributed leadership. Spillane and Diamond (2007) emphasize how most traditional frameworks for studying leadership tend to "privilege individual actions" (p. 6) at the macro level. For example, when examining school improvement initiatives of a school, during which data from standardized tests scores are being used to determine and develop instructional, curriculum, and assessment strategies that will improve student achievement, most often the focus is on the actions of the formal school leaders and their actions in initiating such school improvement activities. Little scrutiny is placed on the many other individuals, and their roles in contributing to the development and implementation of improvement strategies for the instruction, curriculum, and assessment at the school. Additionally, too often little

consideration is given to the countless interactions between group members who will carry out the school improvement strategies. Moreover, it becomes plain to see that interactions between group members that ultimately shape the school improvement practices of the school are shaped by the many different situations, routines, and tools that are used by the group members in pursuit of school improvement.

Given the common school improvement scenario just described, conclusions in the same studies above (McBeth 2008; Spillane, 2006, 2009; Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004) suggest that in order not to downplay the important day-to-day practices of leadership, by focusing too heavily on the actions of formally designated and individual leaders, we must develop new conceptual frameworks, ones that consider the totality of leadership actions and group interactions that directly shape practice. A common theme among these several important studies is that these researchers herald distributed leadership as the best conceptual framework for examining school leadership and management. According to Spillane and those associated with his research, distributed leadership frameworks can be used as analytical and diagnostic tools through which school improvement and school leadership actions can be framed. It is the potential of distributed leadership to serve as an analytical tool and a diagnostic tool that makes distributed leadership such a powerful concept. According to Spillane and others, for a distributed leadership perspective to truly function as an effective analytical and diagnostic tool for school leadership, management, and improvement, it must encompass two aspects - the leader plus aspect and the practice aspect.

The *leader plus* aspect of distributed leadership presses us to consider and admit that the work within schools and the activities involved in leading schools involves the important contributions of multiple individuals (McBeth 2008; Spillane, 2006, 2009; Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). Even more important is the realization that leadership and management activities involve more than just formal leaders. Formal leaders and managers, as well as other organizational group members without formal leadership designations, work together in many different situations to lead and manage the schoolhouse. In this way, state Spillane and Diamond (2007), in reference to Frost (2005) and MacBeath (2006), "leading and managing transcend formal positions" (p. 7). In essence, Spillane's et al notion of the leader plus aspect of distributed leadership cautions us about viewing school leadership and management solely from the view of what formal leaders do within the organization. Rather, we must acknowledge the work of all organizational members who have contributed to and who have played a part in leading and managing activities in the school.

The *practice* aspect of distributed leadership holds to the idea that distributed perspectives frame leadership activities, or practices, as products of a web of interactions in countless situations between leaders and followers (Spillane, 2006, 2009; Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004; McBeth 2008). This distributed view of leadership practices in schools shifts the focus from school administrators, formal school leaders, and principals to the complex and intricate web of leaders, followers, and their situations. This shift of focus facilitated by a distributed perspective gives form to the overall leadership practices in a

school. Spillane and Diamond (2007) assert that our ability to understand the dynamics of the *practice* aspect of distributed leadership is enhanced by distinguishing between leaders and followers and how they are influenced and make decisions about how they interact within situations that ultimately shape practices of the organization.

When considering the image of school leaders, the most common image that comes to mind is that of the lone principal. The principal, as discussed earlier, is the person who is most likely responsible for most of the leadership activities and practices of a school. A distributed perspective helps us move beyond this misguided image, to acknowledge that leadership practices, even in the most centrally controlled schools, are spread out over multiple players that exert influence over how leadership practices are carried out in a school (McBeth 2008; Spillane, 2006, 2009; Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). For example, leadership practices for instruction in schools involve leaders at multiple levels. The principal, assistant principals, teachers, and others all make decisions and carry out actions, individually or collectively, that influence the instruction practices of the school.

Critical to the notion of the leader, is the notion of the follower. Within a distributed perspective it is important to make a distinction between the two. Though people in schools flow back and forth between leader and follower roles, followers define the leader. Without followers there is no leadership. Followers define the leader by choosing to move in the desired direction as put forth by the leader, or they can choose to ignore or alter the directions as put forth by the leader. As Spillane and Diamond (2007) state; "followers 'construct' leaders as legitimate based on their perceptions of the leader" (p. 9). A distributed perspective helps us understand the dynamic and interactive

relationships between leaders and followers by allowing us to examine how followers make decisions about their own actions within the practices of the school. Although the follower is not initiating leadership activities that move the organization and its members forward, the follower has a great deal of agency in deciding if they will follow and carry out the activities that have been initiated by organizational leaders.

Finally, researchers also emphasize the importance of the *situation* in contributing to the practices within organizations (Spillane, 2006, 2009; Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004; McBeth 2008). The situation in which leaders and followers interact is the defining factor in how more or less difficult it is to achieve the desired ends of an organization. In schools, countless, complex, and ever evolving situations and circumstances influence the behaviors and actions of leaders and followers. Situations dictate what leaders do and how they act upon followers. Situations influence how followers choose to react to leaders and their directives. Spillane and Diamond (2007) contribute the following statement that emphasizes the importance of the situation within the practice aspect of distributed leadership: "From a distributed perspective, however, aspects of the situation do not simply 'affect' what school leaders do as some sort of independent variable(s); the situation is *constitutive* of leadership and management practice" (p. 10). Thus, aspects of the situation, such as routines and tools, combined with the interactions of leaders and followers do not just shape or influence practices of an organization, but rather they are the instrumental factors in defining practices of an organization.

The Powerful Image of Distributed Leadership

The construct of distributed leadership has become such a powerful image due to the overwhelming amount and optimistic nature of normatively oriented literature on the topic (Leithwood, Mascall, & Straus, 2009). The wide spread optimism about distributed leadership arises out of several anticipated benefits. First, distributed leadership reflects the "new work order" (Hartley, 2007) and divisions of labor within organizations that contribute to the reduction of errors "arising from decisions based on limited information available to a single leader" (Leithwood, et al., 2009). Distributed leadership also allows organizations to capitalize on the capacities of more of the individuals within the organization. Individuals are then empowered to contribute to the organization in more meaningful ways, to include interdependent interactions with other group members, thus, strengthening the capacity of the organization. Leithwood, et al. (2009), suggest that increased participation in decision making contributes to greater commitment to organizational goals and objectives. Distributed leadership has the potential to reduce workloads through more equitable distribution of work tasks. Distributed leadership perspectives allow organizations to develop leaders on the job. Distributed leadership allows organization members to better respond to challenges faced by the organization, and overcome these challenges through creative and collective problem solving, not possible at the individual level. In general, distributed leadership has become such a powerful image because it is argued to enhance the work experience of group members and to increase organizational capacity of organizations to achieve desired goals and objectives.

One can easily understand why the distributed leadership construct might, and does, generate such excitement as a result of the anticipated benefits of distributed leadership as described in the previous paragraph. However attractive these potential benefits are, evidence to support these positive outcomes when distributed leadership perspectives are normatively applied in schools is mixed at best. There is conspicuous research that supports distributed leadership in the areas of teacher collaboration with peers, administrators, and parents in planning and decision making for school improvement (Clift & Thurston, 1995; Rubin, 2009). There is research literature that supports positive effects from tests of transformational and shared leadership in schools (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990b, 1999a, 2000). There is adequate research that supports the notion that teacher retention and job satisfaction are enhanced through shared leadership (Hulpia, Devos, & Van Keer, 2009; Sheppard, Hurley, & Dibbon, 2010) and by way of the role of the "teacher leader" (Harris & Muijs, 2005). Where the literature on distributed leadership falls short, however, is in the provision of evidence that distributed leadership has an effect on student achievement and outcomes. If research on distributed leadership cannot provide evidence that it positively shapes practices that positively affect student achievement, all of the supporting literature mentioned above is for naught. Therefore, in the following sections of this literature review I will analyze and examine the diverse research literature on distributed leadership as it pertains to school improvement. I will review literature that examines the effects of distributed leadership on organizational change in schools, the roles and influence of the school principal, teacher collaboration and shared decision making, job satisfaction and organizational

commitment of teacher leaders, and most of all, increased student achievement and outcomes.

Distributed Leadership and Organizational Change in Schools

The literature on organizational change in schools clearly demonstrates that distributed leadership is an important component in influencing positive school change and improvement. Most of the literature pertaining to distributed leadership and school improvement focuses on the area of organizational change. Angelle (2010) suggests that distributed leadership practices and perspectives support positive organizational change by influencing the growth of organizational capacity and culture through enhanced trust between school faculty members. Angelle goes on to report that enhanced trust among faculty members improves efficacy of the members and the sense of organizational affiliation of the members due to increased positive interactions and experiences among faculty members.

Polite (1993) in an examination of one traditional junior high school's transition to a middle school, found that distributed leadership practices were critical in helping the school community and its faculty members negotiate this difficult transition. Specifically, Polite reports that distributed leadership perspectives significantly aided the school's faculty in the rearticulation of the school mission, realignment the school's structural frameworks, program redefinition, renegotiation of formal and informal roles of staff members, and redistribution of power among staff. According to Polite, throughout the transitional process of this school, staff members experienced a shift in their paradigms with regard to formal and informal leadership roles. Likewise, they experienced a shift in

their paradigms about the effects of leadership redistribution on the teaching and learning

processes.

Ritchie and Woods (2007), in a case study involving eight primary schools and

two secondary schools who were identified as demonstrating "good distributed leadership

practices", explore the complexities of distributed leadership in schools and how schools,

as organizations, operate within and negotiate these complexities. Ritchie's and Woods'

research and findings provide insight into how schools move along a proposed distributed

leadership continuum from emerging, through developing, to a situation where

distributed leadership is embedded in an organization. With regard to distributed

leadership practices, as schools move along the distributed leadership continuum, they

experience a shift of staff relationships to ones of "reciprocal interdependency" (p. 377).

Ritchie and Woods also report that though the concept of distributed leadership is

complex and not a single phenomenon, the threefold typology (emerging, developing,

and embedded) used to examine the participant schools, helped schools as organizations

improve their leadership capacities. As schools moved along the distributed leadership

continuum, Ritchie and Woods note that schools saw an increase in trust among staff,

redefinition of formal leadership roles, increased role modeling on the parts of leaders,

and increased initiative to seek out leadership roles on the parts of those who previously

held no leadership roles.

In two series research reports on large scale research studies that that explore the

effects of transformational/distributed leadership practices on organizational conditions,

organizational change, and student engagement in schools, Leithwood and Jantzi (1999b,

2000) found that distributed leadership practices strongly influenced organizational

conditions and change in schools, yet had a moderate effect on student engagement in

schools. Both of these studies are replication studies in which survey instruments were

used to collect data on 1818 teachers and 6490 students in the 1999 study, and 1762

teachers and 9941 students in the 2000 study. In both studies Leithwood and Jantzi look

at the effects of transformational/distributed leadership on school conditions and student

engagement within an established framework of conditions in which school leadership

might exert its influence. These conditions include: Purpose and goals, school structure

and social networks, people, and organizational culture. In both studies through

descriptive statistical analysis, Leithwood and Jantzi, concluded that

tansformational/distributed leadership practices in schools had strong positive effects on

staff members' and students' perceptions as to the purpose and goals of their respective

schools. Similarly, strong positive effects were observed on the organizational cultures of

the schools, as reported by the staffs and students, due to school structures and social

networks that were established or enhanced through trust and interdependency among

members. Surprisingly, with the statistical evidence showing an enhanced effect on

school conditions due to transformational/distributed leadership practices, the effect of

these practices on student engagement was much weaker. Other that statistical evidence,

Leithwood and Jantzi provide little insight into why they made this conclusion.

Elmore (1999) lays out a model for distributed leadership in response to the

organizational changes needed in schools to address the ever encroaching standards based

curriculums. Elmore rightly observes how standards based curriculums in schools as a

result of educational reform, have forced educators to evaluate and reconsider how

schools should help students learn. However, in the midst of this standards based school

reform, Elmore also rightly observes that US public schools are not adequately equipped to meet the demands of such reform. Elmore suggests that it is necessary to take a holistic approach to the improvement of teaching and learning rather than focusing on the individual and isolated schools and classrooms. According to Elmore, this requires substantial changes in how leadership is defined and practiced in US schools.

Based on his research in Community School District Two in New York City, Elmore (1999) has developed a model of distributed leadership consisting of two main tasks:

1. Describing rules and procedures for leaders and staff to follow in their school improvement efforts.

2. Outlining how leadership and responsibility are shared (p.6).

Central to Elmore's model is the assumption "that what goes on in the classroom is a collective good—a common concern of the whole institution—as well as a private and individual concern" (p. 6). Elmore's model focuses on the criticality of interdependent relationships within schools; relationships that help to develop and distribute knowledge of individuals and groups, thus helping to create new forms of practice that transform the organization.

Distributed Leadership and the Role of the School Principal

One myth of taking a distributed perspective to study school improvement, leadership, and management is that distributed perspectives and frameworks negate or diminish the role of the school principal and formal leaders (Spillane and Diamond 2007). Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, as noted earlier in this literature review there is ample research literature that supports the notion of the *leader plus* aspect

of distributed leadership, in which we admit that the work within schools and the

activities involved in leading schools involves the important contributions of multiple

individuals (McBeth 2008; Spillane, 2006, 2009; Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane,

Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). In other words,

the multiple individuals involved in managing and leading schools includes the principal

to a high degree. There are several important studies on distributed leadership that

emphasize the importance of the role of the principal in sustained school improvement

and managing the challenges of leadership succession in schools. Important studies on

distributed leadership that highlight the importance of the principal's role in school

improvement and leadership succession include studies by Chirichello (2003), Leithwood

and Jantzi (1990a; 1990b), Leithwood, Mascall, Straus, Sacks, Memon, and Yashkina

(2007), Wright (2008), Murphy, Smylie, Mayrowetz and Louis (2009), Hargreaves

(2009), and six case studies included in Spillane's and Diamond's (2007) edited work by

Coldren (2007), Halverson (2007), Diamond (2007), Hallett (2007), Zoltners-Sherer

(2007), and Burch (2007).

Chirichello (2003) uses a distributed perspective to examine and evaluate the

novel concept of co-principals in two elementary schools in Mansfield, Massachusetts.

The schools in Chirichello's study employed a team of school administrators consisting

of two co-principals and an assistant principal, under the assumption that such a uniquely

and carefully crafted team of school administrators would help reduce the amount of time

the administrators spent on managerial duties while increasing the amount of time the

administrators spent on leading the development and supervision of instructional

activities. Chirichello found this assumption to be mostly confirmed at the two schools,

that the co-principal arrangement mostly worked well. Though the administrators

reported that they initially had to overcome the ambiguity of their new roles, they soon

found themselves more effectively involved in the rich work of curriculum and staff

development. Staff reported that there was more accessibility to the administrators. Staff

also reported feeling better supported.

Leithwood (1990a; 1990b) has led and contributed to two relevant studies that

specifically examine the roles of school principals and formal leaders within distributed

leadership frameworks in schools. In a 1990 study, Leithwood and Jantzi examined the

extent to which school principals had an effect on collaborative school cultures and

school improvement processes within twelve schools in Ontario, Canada. The twelve

participant schools were chosen due to their stated commitments to using

transformations/distributed leadership perspectives in their school improvement

initiatives. A causal network matrix, that examined events by time, leader roles by time,

etc., was used as a data collection instrument. What Leithwood and Jantzi found was that

over a three year period the schools had generally developed school cultures that

demonstrated moderate to high degrees of collaboration. However, Leithwood and Jantzi

also reported that it is difficult to point directly to the broad strategies used by

administrators as the influence for the development of the collaborative cultures in the

participant schools. Broad strategies used by the administrators included but were not

limited to: improving school culture, the employment of various bureaucratic

mechanisms to influence change, increased staff professional learning, communicating to

staff directly about school vision and mission, distribution of power among staff

members, and the emphasis upon school culture through the expression of routines, artifacts, rituals and traditions.

In a 2007 study Leithwood, Mascall, Straus, Sacks, Memon, and Yashkina looked at leadership distribution in schools to determine patterns of who performed which leadership roles and activities in schools. The focus of the study was specifically, what leadership functions are performed by non-administrative leaders versus formal administrative leaders? Furthermore, how do formal leaders facilitate the leadership functions of the non-formal leaders? According to Leithwood et al. the most noteworthy finding of the study was that formal leaders, in schools and at the district level, play the most critical roles in fostering distributed forms of leadership in schools, carried out through the leadership development of staff members.

In a study on the effects and implications of leadership succession on sustainable school improvement, Hargreaves (2009) argues that just as teacher turnover and succession dramatically affect schools, leadership succession is one of the most overlooked factors in sustaining school improvement and implementing effective school change. In fact, Hargreaves (2009) states that, "one of the most significant events in the life of a school is when it undergoes a change of leadership" (p. 10). In this article, Hargreaves outlines how mismanagement of leadership succession in schools most often has serious negative implications on the culture of the school and the sustainment of the school's improvement initiatives. Hargreaves (2009, p. 10) puts forth five challenges to successful leadership succession in schools:

1. Successions are poorly planned.

2. Successions transitions are poorly managed.

3. Succession is on the wrong frequency. The wrong person is appointed as principal at the wrong time.

4. Succession planning fails to consider emotional aspects.

5. Succession is not treated as a systemic problem.

Hargreaves found, as a result of this study, if school systems work to build and develop leadership stability through systemic and distributed leadership frameworks, that the challenges faced during leadership successions are greatly decreased. The premise of Hargreaves's findings is that, "It's hard enough for improvement efforts to be successful. Through better succession, they can also become more sustainable" (p. 15).

Drawing upon distributed frameworks as outlined by Spillane (2006), Wright (2008) examines the benefits and limitations of applied distributed frameworks in school improvement as experienced by school principals. In this collective case study and through the theoretical lens of distributed leadership, Wright seeks and explores the informative voice of 17 school administrators (13 principals, 2 assistant principals, and 2 central office administrators) and how they define and evaluate their own leadership roles and behaviors in contrast to imposed school reform initiatives. Wright found that as school leaders carefully considered their leadership actions within distributed leadership frameworks, the majority of them began to challenge the old instructional leadership models in which the principal was responsible for directly managing and controlling teaching and learning. School administrators also reported a new sensitivity and appreciation for how Spillane's concepts of the *leaders plus* and the *situation* aspects of distributed leadership affected their leadership practices and styles.

In a single case study that explores the roles formal school leaders play in helping distributed leadership develop, grow, and succeed in schools, Murphy, Smylie, Mayrowetz, and Louis (2009) underscore the importance of formal leaders and their parts in facilitating school improvement through distributed leadership. Part of a three year investigation, in this study the authors use interview and document data to outline how one middle school principal overcame cultural, professional, and systemic challenges to develop an organization with highly distributed leadership frameworks. Again, in this study the foundations of Spillane's theories of distributed leadership are clearly seen as the participant middle school principal developed distributed leadership frameworks in her school as her awareness of the *leader plus* and the *situation* aspects of distributed leadership increased.

Six case studies (Burch, 2007; Coldren, 2007; Diamond 2007; Hallett 2007; Halverson 2007; and Zoltners-Sherer, 2007;) included in Spillanes' and Diamond's (2007) edited volume are all reports from a four year longitudinal study which focused on 13 elementary schools in Chicago. This study remains the largest study on distributed leadership perspectives and practices in schools. All six case studies help illustrate and define the distributed leadership construct and how it informs practices in schools. Though these case studies certainly provide insight into how distributed leadership impacts student learning outcomes and teacher collaboration and collegiality, as I will discuss in later sections of this chapter, the overall and central findings in these important case studies is that formal leaders are crucial to fostering and influencing distributed leadership perspectives and frameworks in schools. It is clear to see in each of these case studies that the school principal is an important player in each story. Though each case

study somewhat tells a story of the experience of each school principal, the findings put forth in these case studies show that the school is the most appropriate level at which leadership expertise should be primarily developed, rather than the primary leadership focus being placed on the individual formal leader. This is to say that the school principal is important in fostering distributed leadership practices that are "stretched over the school's social and situational contexts" (Harris, 2008, p. 50).

Distributed Leadership, Teacher Collaboration, and Organizational Commitment

Few would argue that in schools and schooling student learning is the top priority. Therefore, in order to achieve the best possible education for students, teachers must be equipped with the best knowledge, skills, dispositions, and tools to teach students effectively. It is now widely accepted and expected for schools to invest in teacher leadership that ultimately builds capacity for improvement by distributing more leadership responsibilities to teachers (Harris & Muijs, 2005). In all types of schools, teachers are in unique positions to influence the quality of teaching and learning; therefore they can become important contributors to development and change in their schools. Teachers are a school's greatest resource to make education and educational change possible (Green, 2009). If therefore teachers are a school's greatest resource, one must certainly consider how distributed leadership frameworks contribute to and inform the practices and dispositions of teachers.

In this section of this literature review I will focus on research literature that examines how distributed leadership influences teacher collaboration and shared decision making (Clift & Thurston, 1995; Harris & Muijs, 2005), and job satisfaction and

organizational commitment among teacher leaders (Hulpia, Devos, & Rosseel, 2009; Hulpia, Devos, & Van Keer, 2009; and Leithwood, 1997).

In their edited book, Clift and Thurston (1995) review four case studies that look at distributed leadership practices and processes involved with organizational change in four participant schools. The four cases reviewed by Clift and Thurston involved four schools (two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school), all in various stages of very challenging school change. The one characteristic that all schools had in common was that of poor student achievement, which naturally spurred the change and reform efforts at each school. What Clift and Thurston noted in their review of these four case studies was that the four schools were vastly different with regard to age levels of students, dispositions and make up of faculty and staff, focus of curriculums, and student and community demographics. Clift and Thurston also found that the experiences of faculty and staff involved in the school improvement processes varied greatly. Nonetheless, as each school began to realize and experience improvement as a result of their reform efforts, Clift and Thurston determined that the faculty and staff members in each school would often assume fluid roles as leaders and followers governed by the many different situational contexts brought about by the reform efforts. These new leader and follower roles, as noted by Clift and Thurston were not typical in the pre-reform routines and practices of the schools.

Clift and Thurston (1995) point out that obviously, there are many differences between these schools and their unique situations that make generalizations of results problematic. Nevertheless, in all cases, reform would not have progressed had not it been for the staff members, "who, at times became leaders and who, at times, followed the

guidelines and suggestions of others" (Clift and Thurston, 1995, p. 13). Thus, as

determined by Clift and Thurston, staff members developed a new set of relationships

with regard to leadership practices at their schools. This is illustrative of distributed

leadership as a relational and communicative process. Clift and Thurston reported this

common theme in each of the four cases.

In a work that explores how teachers, through various leadership activities,

contribute to improvement of teaching and learning in schools, Harris and Muijs (2005)

investigate the roles and responsibilities of teachers who take on leadership roles in

school improvement and reform initiatives. In this book Harris and Muijs clearly state

and outline that teacher leaders are critical to authentic and sustained school

improvement. Within their thesis they do explore some of the challenges and implications

of teacher leadership on the roles and responsibilities of teachers in schools. Two main

challenges stand out in Harris's and Muijs's commentary:

1. Many teachers are reluctant to accept leadership roles for various personal and

    professional reasons.

2. Changes in traditional modes and types of teacher professional development are

    needed in order for teachers to be adequately equipped and to develop as

    instructional leaders focused on school improvement.

Harris's and Muijs's conclusions in the book clearly affirm their thesis; that

teacher leaders play critical roles in leading improvement in schools and classrooms.

Furthermore, Harris and Muijs (2005) conclude that teacher leadership in schools directly

contributes to raising achievement of learners in schools. Their conclusions are based on

the review of evidence from two research studies: The Gatsby Teacher effectiveness

study and a second study funded by the General Teaching Council of England and the National Union of Teachers in England. Both studies focused on the relationship between teacher leadership and teacher effectiveness as well as teacher leadership as a means of professional collaboration for school improvement. Harris and Muijs conclude that to really bring about authentic school improvement, teacher leadership must be embraced. This means "engaging in a new professionalism that gives teachers more autonomy and self-direction" (Harris & Muijs, 2005, p. 9). This "new professionalism" will help teachers regain the professional ground of teaching currently occupied by the likes of standards based reform and high stakes testing (Harris & Muijs, 2005).

As in studies such as those by Clift and Thurston (1995) and Harris and Muijs (2005), in which they explore the impact of collaboration and shared decision making of teacher leaders and the impact on school improvement, a natural direction of progression in the review of research literature is an exploration of how teacher leadership roles shape teacher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Clift and Thurston (1995) and Harris and Muijs (2005) all touched upon this lightly when they discussed how when some teachers are faced with assuming new leadership roles, they often do not want to assume these roles for various personal and professional reasons, to include increased workloads and lack of professional development. This highlights the importance of research studies such as those by Leithwood (1997), Hulpia, Devos, and Rosseel (2009), Hulpia, Devos, and Van Keer (2009), Sheppard, Hurley, and Dibbon (2010). These researchers have all conducted important studies that have brought to light the phenomena of job satisfaction and organizational commitment of teacher leaders in schools where distributed leadership perspectives shape the practices of the schools.

distributed leadership, shared decision making, and teacher organizational commitment within various situational contexts. In both analyses the level of cooperation within school leadership teams and the level to which teachers were allowed to assume leadership roles, were good predictors of teacher organizational commitment. Not surprisingly, Hulpia et al (2009; 2009), in both studies, found that the levels of professional development and leadership support were also good predictors of teacher job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Sheppard, Hurley, and Dibbon (2010), through their research, have explored the direct and indirect effects of distributed leadership on teacher morale and enthusiasm. These researchers boldly put forth that until leadership research is focused primarily on how leadership frameworks affect those that work directly with students, in other words teachers, that our understanding of leadership practice and student outcomes will be severely limited. This proclaimed deficient area in the research is where Sheppard et al direct the focus of their study. Using path analysis techniques, Sheppard et al examine the relationships of various variables to include formal leadership roles in schools, teacher leadership, collaborative leadership and shared decision making, teacher morale and enthusiasm. Resulting evidence from the study suggests that distributed leadership practices lend themselves to building teacher leadership capacity in schools as a result of increased participation in school leadership roles. This increased participation in leadership roles results in increased teacher morale and enthusiasm (Sheppard, Hurley, & Dibbon, 2010).

In a study much like his work on transformational leadership and the perceptions of school principals, Leithwood (1997) explore the effects of transformational and distributed leadership on the perceptions of teacher leaders. Survey instruments were used to gather data from 2,727 teachers in a large school district and interview instruments were used to gather data from teachers in six secondary schools. The data showed that teachers have a strong belief that the leadership of principals and the leadership of teachers have a strong influence on school improvement and school culture. Additionally, the independent influence of teacher leaders was strongest, even more so than the principal, in the areas of school planning and school organization. Teachers reported increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment as a result of increased input into school policy and management.

The teacher interviews at the six secondary schools revealed a portrait of teacher leaders at the schools in regard to their professional dispositions and skills. According to the interview data reported by Leithwood (1997), the outstanding teacher leaders at the schools were dependable, collegial, self-directing and proactive, and genuinely committed to the work of others and the improvement of the school. In addition and more importantly, teacher leaders conspicuously possessed highly developed technical skills that they successfully employed in various situational contexts involving students, staff members, school policy, and subject matter content.

Hulpia has led two important studies (Hulpia, Devos, & Rosseel, 2009; Hulpia, Devos, & Van Keer, 2009) that examine teacher organizational commitment in relation to distributed leadership contexts. In both studies questionnaires were administered to teachers (n=1,770 in the first study and n=1,522 in the second study) with regard to

Distributed Leadership and Student Achievement

As stated, the most important outcome of schools and schooling is increased student achievement and learning. As much as distributed leadership is held and viewed as a powerful tool and framework for school improvement, the research literature that shows a direct positive impact on student learning and achievement is limited. The difficulties in establishing causal effects of the distributed leadership construct on student achievement lies in the lack of a normative definition and the theoretical nature of distributed leadership. Thus, in a quantitative sense it is difficult to situate the distributed leadership construct as an independent variable. Difficulties aside, there are but a few notable example of research studies (Harris & Muijs, 2005; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1998, 2000; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004) that attempt to and that are somewhat effective in making a connection with the effects of distributed leadership on student achievement.

Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) concluded in a published review of literature on how leadership practices influence student achievement and learning, that there is evidence in the literature to support a connection and association between increased student learning and achievement outcomes and school leaders who develop and implement distributed and shared leadership frameworks that solicit contributions from teachers and staff within their schools. Leithwood and Jantzi (1998) conducted one of the few correlational studies on distributed leadership and the effects on student engagement and learning in schools. In the 1998 study Liethwood and Jantzi surveyed almost 3,000 teachers and 10,000 students in 110 schools in a large school district. Participants were asked about their perceptions of the effects of various school

leaders on student engagement in school. Surprisingly, the findings suggested that neither

principal nor teacher leadership were perceived as having important effects on student

engagement or achievement. However, Leithwood and Jantzi concluded and reported that

leadership distributed to teachers was perceived to have greater direct effect on student

engagement and learning outcomes than does that of the principal because teachers are

directly involved with the students on a daily basis. Though the perception is that the

effects of distributed leadership on student engagement and learning outcomes are small

compared to other variable factors in schools, the findings do provide support for

continued distribution of leadership functions beyond the principal.

Harris and Muijs (2005), in their study of school improvement through teacher

leadership conclude that teacher leadership does improve teaching effectiveness, and that

teacher leadership does enhance professional collaboration in schools. The authors go

onto report that teacher leadership directly contributes to increased student achievement.

Once again, this is a case of researchers relying upon correlational data to substantiate

their claims. Harris and Muijs's findings do show a high correlation between increased

teacher leadership and increased student achievement.

The distributed leadership studies led by Spillane (Spillane, Halverson, &

Diamond, 2004; Spillane and Diamond, 2007), remain the most prominent contemporary

studies of distributed leadership practices. These studies in the USA, funded by the

National Science Foundation and the Spencer Foundation focuses on distributed

leadership frameworks and the effects on leadership and instructional practices in

schools, as well as on instructional and student outcomes resulting from distributed

leadership practices. These longitudinal studies, which focused on 13 elementary schools

in Chicago, found that the most important factor in increasing student achievement is improved teacher instruction in the classroom. These findings are not surprising or revolutionary. The important message in these findings, according to Spillane is that instructional leadership, that results in increased student performance, is best implemented and most effective when it is distributed across the constellation of constituents in a school, rather than when it emerges as the directives of a single instructional leader, most often the principal.

Though the research studies reviewed in this section purport to show a direct connection between distributed leadership practices in schools and student achievement, these types of findings are often times found to be problematic due to the correlational nature of the findings. Correlational findings are often seen as problematic because they do not show causal effects. Therefore in these studies, can one so clearly and certainly state that the independent variable of distributed leadership directly contributed to increases in student achievement?

As published in a report by the Edvantia Corporation (2005), Pitner (1988) offers a theoretical model to aid in the understanding of the correlational relationships between school leadership practices of principals and teachers and student achievement. Called the *reciprocal-effects model* (Figure 1), this model simply outlines the logical and reciprocal nature of leadership and student interactions, intervening variables, and student achievement. The resulting conditions of student achievement then produce and act as feedback that will, in turn, shape the principal's and the teacher's future leadership actions (Edvantia, 2005).

Figure 1. Modeling School Leadership Effects on Student Achievement

Reciprocal Effects Model

```
┌─────────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────────┐
│ Principal Leadership │ ◄──► │ Intervening Variables│ ◄──► │ Student Achievement  │
└─────────────────────┘      └─────────────────────┘      └─────────────────────┘
```
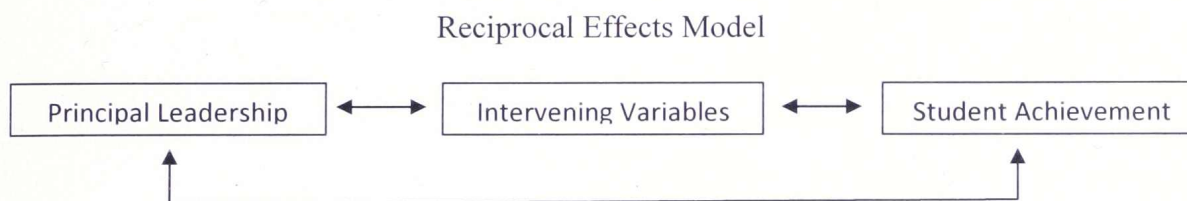
Source: Pitner, 1988, pp. 105-108

The reciprocal-effects model assumes that some or all of the relationship between administrators and student achievement occurs through interaction with features of the school organization (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). This suggests that principal behaviors are ultimately causally related to student performance through their interactions with other people in the school, mostly teachers. Teachers and staff members at the school then interact with the students in instructional activities. Therefore theoretically, the principal is both a dependent and independent variable (Pitner, 1988). As a dependent variable, the administrative behaviors of the principal are influenced by other variables within the school, such as teachers, students, school culture, and parents. As an independent variable, the actions of the principal influence the actions of teachers, the school, and student achievement (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1990a).

Criticisms of Distributed Leadership

As I have outlined in this literature review, there is a great deal of literature that is illustrative of the positive consequences of distributed leadership. Nevertheless, it is extremely important to scrutinize distributed leadership and examine it critically. Too often new leadership theories are developed, introduced, and applied in practice without any significant critique. Schools, unfortunately, are too often the recipients of these new and untested leadership models; models that are sold to them in the promise of school

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improvement with little empirical evidence. To this situation Levin (2006) rightly states, "There are many viewpoints in the field of leadership and very little solid research supporting them. Much of what parades as research is garbed in the language of research" (p. 52). Levin's comments highlight the importance of critical analysis when considering distributed leadership, or any other leadership model.

Harris (2008) warns, "Distributed leadership should not simply be taken at face value as a good thing" (p. 32). Silins and Mulford (2002) state that though the evidence supporting distributed leadership is positive, we must ask critical questions about such things as effects of distributed leadership on organizational development, leadership relationships, student outcomes, and teacher experiences and perceptions of distributed leadership. Miller and Rowan (2006) have studied organic leadership from a distributed perspective for over 15 years. They have concluded that the main effects of distributed leadership are inconclusive and weak at best. In many cases, the assumed and credited positive effects of distributed leadership can be attributed to many other conditions and variables. York-Barr and Duke (2004) reported much the same findings, that very few studies that examine the effects of distributed leadership on student achievement are actually not very supportive. Ritchie and Woods (2007) warn of how distributed leadership can have a negative effect on teacher perceptions due to increased responsibility and workloads with little or no increase in their power. Storey (2004) shows how distributed leadership frameworks in schools can cause confusion in leadership roles by having too many decision makers. Storey outlines how distributed leadership can actually contribute to unproductive competition among leaders,

breakdowns in communications between leaders, and confusion and lack of understanding of the school vision and goals on the parts of stakeholders.

Conclusion

After reviewing the research literature on distributed leadership it is apparent that the debate over the effects of this leadership model on organizational development, teacher leadership, and student achievement is far from over. Presented in most of the literature is a positive view of distributed leadership, yet as I have shown, there are clearly some questions about distributed leadership that still must be addressed. Presented in the literature are balancing and dissenting views that distributed leadership is not as positively effective for students outcomes, organizational development, and teacher leadership, as much of the theoretical literature suggests. However, the majority of the distributed leadership research continues to suggest that distributed perspectives in leadership frameworks are beneficial to schools in their ongoing school improvement initiatives. Therefore, it is expected that the strong theoretical support that undergirds the effectiveness of distributed leadership in school improvement will continue to fuel research findings and literature that support distributed leadership as a viable leadership framework.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Sites and Contexts of Research

The School System

The primary sites for this study were two schools in a rural county school system

in the southeastern United States. The school system has a PK-12 student population of

approximately 5000, distributed among four PK-4 elementary schools, one intermediate

school with grades 5 and 6, one middle school with grades 7 and 8, one 9-12 high school,

and one alternative school that serves a limited population of students in grades 7-12. The

school system is located in a traditionally rural county, which has a population of

approximately 30,000 residents. The racial demographics of the county reflect a

population that is 78% White, 19% Black or African American, 1% Hispanic, 1% Native

American, and 1% Asian. The majority of the households in this county are considered

middle class, as the median family household income is reported at $62,024.

Approximately 8.7% of the population is below the poverty line (United States Census

Bureau, 2010).

Though the residents of this county are considered to be mostly middle class,

there are pocket communities within the county that are high poverty areas. These

poverty areas have resulted in one of the elementary schools being granted federal title 1

status, while the intermediate school and the middle school have been granted federal title

1 targeted assistance status. The rural county in which the participant schools reside is

located near a midsize city and a large military base. Because of its close proximity to the

midsize city and military base, the population and demographics of this county, and

consequently the population and demographics of the school system, are ever changing.

The Schools

The two primary sites of research for this study were Grantham Middle School

(GMS) and Bishop Elementary School (BES). My rationale for choosing GMS and BES

as the sites for this study is simple and it hinges on several factors: (a) of the schools

invited to participate in this study, GMS and BES are the only two schools that agreed to

participate; (b) GMS and BES are both located near where I live and are also partnered

with the local university at which I am a student and where I work as a part-time

instructor. Therefore, I will have greater access and flexibility to observe and interview

participants at both schools; (c) though at different stages of implementation of

distributed leadership practices, both GMS and BES regularly practice distributed type

leadership activities. This allowed me greater access to teachers and school

administrators in order to analyze and examine their distributed leadership practices in

relation to teaching and learning, and how their perceptions of distributed leadership are

shaped by those leadership practices; (d) both GMS and BES had a generous amount and

variety of student achievement data, to which I had unlimited access; and finally, (e) little

data has been collected or analyzed with regard to distributed leadership at these two

schools. To my knowledge, my research on distributed leadership was the first to be

conducted at these schools and will hopefully be of great use to the teachers and

administrators of these schools and the school system.

Grantham Middle School

Grantham Middle School is a public middle school serving approximately 700 students in grades 7 and 8. Grantham Middle School has been practicing distributed leadership for four years, and is the only middle school in the school district. As mentioned, Grantham Middle School has a student population of approximately 700 students, of which 76% are White, 18% are Black or African American, 3% are Hispanic or Latino, 1% are Asian, 1% are Native American, and 1% are Multi-racial. Grantham Middle School has a students with disabilities population of 6%. Furthermore, 34% of GMS's students are economically disadvantaged, thus earning GMS federal title 1 targeted assistance status (Georgia Department of Education, 2011).

Grantham has a long history in the school district in which it resides. Once serving as the district high school, until 1993 when it was remodeled and designated Grantham Middle School, it has since served as the only middle school in the district. The Grantham school building, either as a high school or middle school, has served as a centerpiece of the rural county community for over 50 years.

In 2007 GMS experienced a leadership change, when a new principal was appointed after the residing principal retired after 21 years as the principal of Grantham. Until the leadership change in 2007, leadership practices at Grantham were of the traditional type, where the principal was at the center and primary in all leadership decisions, activities, and practices at the school. This is to say that most leadership activities, prior to the leadership change, originated at the principal's office, at which time teachers and staff were expected to carry out these activities and initiatives. The new

principal, in response to rapidly changing state curriculums and school improvement

initiatives, ushered in new leadership styles and practices based on distributed leadership.

Bishop Elementary School

Bishop Elementary School is a public elementary school serving approximately

500 students in Pre-Kindergarten through 4th grade. Bishop Elementary School was in its

first year of implementing distributed leadership practices. Though BES was in the initial

stages of implementation with regard to distributed leadership practices, this school was a

valuable source of information for this study, in the sense that it was important and

valuable to capture teacher and administrator perceptions of distributed leadership

practices in an organization that was authentically experiencing the transition from

traditional leadership structures and practices to those based on distributed leadership

principles.

Bishop Elementary was built and operational in 1998. Of the approximately 500

students at BES, 84% are White, 9% are Black or African American, 4% are Hispanic or

Latino, 1% are Asian, and 1% are Multi-racial. Bishop Elementary has a population of

students with disabilities of 9%. Though the perception of BES, with in the local

community, is often that of a school with students from mostly middle to upper class

families, BES does have a significant population of students from low income

households. Low socioeconomic students make up 28% of the BES student population

(Georgia Department of Education, 2011).

In 2010 BES experienced a leadership change, when a new principal was

appointed. The residing principal had been the only principal at BES since it opened in

1998. Like Grantham, until the leadership change in 2010, leadership practices at Bishop

were of the traditional type, where the principal was the primary initiator of leadership decisions, activities, and practices at the school. Again, as is commonly the case in traditional US education, most leadership activities, prior to the leadership change at BES, originated at the principal's office, at which time teachers and staff were expected to carry out these activities and initiatives. The new principal, in response to recent stakeholder perception data and rapidly changing state curriculums and school improvement initiatives, had begun to implement new leadership styles and practices based on distributed leadership.

Participants

The primary participants for this study included any of the teachers and administrators at GMS and BES. Grantham has a teacher population of approximately 50 teachers. The GMS teacher corps is made up of teachers from multiple disciplines to include language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, the arts, special education, and physical education. Grantham has 3 school administrtators to include 1 principal and 2 assistant principals. The experience levels of the teachers at GMS range from 30 plus years to 1 year.

Bishop has a teacher population of approximately 35 teachers. The BES teacher corps is composed of primarily K-5 certified teachers, with the exception of 2 special education teachers, an art teacher, a music teacher, and a physical education teacher. Bishop Elementary has 1 principal and 1 assistant principal. The experience levels of the teachers at BES ranges from 20 plus years to 1 year.

Methodology

In order to examine the construct of distributed leadership, its relationship to student achievement, and how it shapes the practices of educators in relation to teaching and learning in schools, an exploratory mixed methods design within two case studies was utilized. The mixed methods case study design allowed for the examination of the distributed leadership construct within the contexts of two participant schools. In an examination of distributed leadership practices within these two cases, a mixed methods design allowed for the use of a flexible combination of qualitative and quantitative methods that helped to identify anomalous trends and contradictions that might have been missed through the employment of only qualitative or quantitative methods. A mixed methods case study research design allowed me to collect data from multiple sources. Likewise, it allowed for redundancy and triangulation in the types of data collected, thus reducing the possibilities of misinterpretation of results and findings.

As stated, within these two case studies, my exploratory mixed methods design incorporated the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitatively I relied upon both descriptive and inferential statistical data. To collect descriptive statistical data I invited teachers and administrators at the two participant schools to participate in the administration leadership impact survey questionnaires developed by McBeth (2008). To meet the needs of this study, McBeth's leadership impact survey was modified slightly. In my analyses of various student performance data, I employed inferential statistical data collection and analysis to determine if and to what extent distributed leadership practices have had an effect on student achievement.

In a qualitative sense it was my intent to reveal, describe, and bring to the forefront the experiences and perceptions of teachers and administrators regarding the construct of distributed leadership as practiced in the participant schools. To collect this qualitative data within these mixed methods case studies, I relied upon participant observation, non-participant observation, interviews, questionnaires, and archival documents. It must be noted that my data collection methods are modeled after Zoltner-Sherer's data collection methods in her dissertation work in 2006.

Data Collection Methods

Interviews with Teachers and School Administrators

Interviews are useful tools in collecting data that help reveal critical trends and perceptions in qualitative research in general and case studies in particular. In this study interviews helped to determine how and why leadership practices shape teacher perceptions of schooling. Interviews also helped illuminate which leadership practices were most effective in schools. Interviews helped outline and clarify the actions and thought processes of leaders. Interviews also provided clarification as to whom and in what situations persons are viewed as leaders and followers at the school. Interviews provided good opportunities to compare and contrast school leadership practices with school goals and objectives (Zoltner-Sherer, 2006).

Observations of Practice

The observation of school leaders and teachers in action during the execution of their daily routines and duties was a great way to see how leadership was actually practiced in the participant schools. Classroom observations helped reveal how teaching practices relate to the leadership practices at the participant schools. Observations of

school administrators and teachers allowed me to gain a more comprehensive view of leadership practices at the schools and how these leadership practices are affected by and intertwined with teaching practices (Zoltner-Sherer, 2006).

Attendance at School Meetings

There were many different types and levels of meetings involving leadership at both GMS and BES. Meetings provided unique opportunities to observe leadership relationships with in the schools. Through the attendance of leadership meetings, not only was I be able to be involved in conversations about leadership practices at the schools, but I was also able to compare what in fact school leaders say they will do and what they actually do. The types and frequency of leadership meetings varied at each school. Types of leadership meetings included administrator meetings, grade level meetings, curriculum meetings, leadership team meetings, data analysis meetings, and faculty meetings. Some meetings were conducted weekly, such as grade level meetings, while others were conducted monthly or quarterly, such as faculty meetings and leadership team meetings respectively (Zoltner-Sherer, 2006).

Thick Description of Observations and Events

In order to understand how distributed leadership practices shape and inform the experiences, practices, and agency of teachers and school administrators, the examination of school cultures and the interactions of teachers and school administrtators played a role in my study. Additionally, in my examination of teacher/administrator interactions, I often found myself immersed in the interactions and situational contexts at the participant schools. An understanding of cultures of the participant schools was helpful. My exploration of school cultures and leadership practices within a mixed methods case

study introduced a small yet important taste of ethnographic research methods to this study (Zoltner-Sherer, 2006).

Ethnography has its roots in the field of cultural anthropology. Noted cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) is often cited for his foundational works in studying and interpreting cultural symbols through sustained fieldwork in order to provide an account of a particular society, culture, or community. Ethnography has also become a suitable methodology for educational research, due to the work of Spindler (1955). Through this compilation of essays, Spindler effectively outlines how anthropological methodologies can be effectively brought to bear in the examination of social phenomena in education settings.

Applying a touch of ethnographic methodologies in my study, in the spirit of Spindler and Geertz, allowed me to become immersed in the cultures of the two participant schools, through which I could provide a better description and account of their leadership practices. Aspects of school leadership were not only visible and apparent in the formal daily operations, meetings, and interactions of teachers and administrators, but rather they were also found in the informal settings and interactions during the school day. Knowing this I was able to capture valuable information through the observations of conversations in hallways, offices, meetings, before and after school, and in various other school spaces. Revealing and analyzing the essence of these conversations allowed me to provide a better description and account of the experiences of teachers and administrators in relation to distributed leadership practices in their schools, which is the essence of my study.

Collection and Analysis of Documents and Artifacts

School documents and artifacts were important items in the analysis of school leadership practices. These items document the practices and priorities of leaders and followers in schools. Examples of school documents and artifacts that I analyzed and examined during this study include school improvement plans, teacher surveys, meeting agendas, school calendars, and professional development plans.

Leadership Impact Surveys and Questionnaires

In this study I presented to the participants a Leadership Impact Survey. In this survey participants identified and outlined how they function within the leadership practices of the schools in which they work. From the data collected through the survey I was able to better understand and describe the leadership networks within each organization. It was my intent to use the survey data to create a picture of each participant school's leadership practices, leadership relationships, routines, and tools used in relation to the school improvement and achievement goals.

Student Achievement and Performance Data as Measured by the Georgia CRCT

The instrument that was used to measure student achievement was the Georgia State Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT). This test was implemented statewide in 2000 and is intended to produce a criterion referenced assessment of how well Georgia students, at all grade levels, learn specific content requirements set forth by the state. The specific content standards outlined by the state of Georgia which are assessed by the CRCT are found in the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). The format of this test is selective response based on prescribed content taught in the classrooms of every Georgia school (Georgia Department of Education, 2010).

Due to the fact that the CRCT is based on prescribed GPS standards, this test is considered valid and reliable. Reliability is the first of the two critical components of quality in testing. Reliability asks if an instrument will demonstrate a comparable result for a student every time they use an instrument. In the simplest terms, the reliability of an instrument is how consistently the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure? The Georgia CRCT is reliable in that it accurately and consistently measures student knowledge and skills in comparison to scores obtained from previous tests. The Georgia Department of Education (2010) uses Cronbach's Alpha Internal Consistency Reliability Coefficient as the foundation for the reliability of the CRCT. For the Georgia CRCT total test reliabilities range from 0.79 to 0.86 for Reading, 0.85 to 0.89 for English / Language Arts, 0.87 to 0.91 for Mathematics, 0.89 to 0.90 for Science, and 0.88 to 0.91 for Social Studies.

The second critical component of quality in testing is validity, which is determined through the purpose of the assessment, development and writing of the assessment items, and continuous item review and refinement. Continuous effort is made by the state of Georgia to further refine the CRCT to ensure greater validity. All CRCT items are developed and written by highly qualified content specialists, specifically for the Georgia CRCT. Curriculum specialists and content committees composed of Georgia educators continuously review the assessment items. CRCT Items are consistently reviewed and evaluated for quality and clarity. They are evaluated for content coverage and appropriateness, alignment to the curriculum, and appropriateness in relation to grade level. Clarity of answers and distracters are also evaluated. Finally, test items are reviewed for biases that would present an advantage of disadvantage to any particular

groups. For this study, the CRCT served as an appropriate instrument to use to measure the effects of distributed leadership on student achievement, mainly because the CRCT is considered to be reliable and valid.

Ensuring Quality

Because mixed methods research requires judgments to be made on the parts of the researcher and readers alike, invariably there were perceptions of errors and threats to validity within this study. However, in this study I employed the following methods to reduce threats to validity in my research and to ensure quality within the study by remaining solidly grounded within the theoretical perspectives, methodologies, and methods of the research parameter that I have set.

Triangulation

As mentioned above, I used multiple data collection methods. I also collected data from multiple participants. Furthermore I collected data at multiple research sites. Employment of triangulation helped me identify converging patterns which helped facilitate a better overall interpretation of events. Triangulation also helped ensure a more reflective analysis of the data on the parts of the researcher and reader.

Clearly Defined Methods of Data Collection and Analysis for Participants

Unavoidably, my methods of data collection influenced the behavior of the participants and the course of my entire study. Therefore, it was critical that I include in my final reporting of the study a clear exposition and discussion of the employed methods. This will provide the reader with critical information needed to judge whether the study and my findings are valid and supported by the presented data.

Respondent Validation

Also referred to as "member checking," this technique helped ensure quality of my research by allowing me to compare the researcher's account and interpretations with participant accounts and interpretations. Because "distance" does exist between the researcher and participants, this comparison helped provide clarity by reducing unintentional biases on the part of the researcher.

Analysis of other Cases

During the course of this study, I as a researcher drew conclusions and interpreted findings. To ensure the quality of my findings I attempted to seek out other studies that either supported or refuted my findings. The analysis of other cases takes place primarily in my literature review. Presenting these cases in the literature review allows the reader to compare my findings with other studies.

Reflexivity

Throughout the entire study I tried to be vigilant in my sensitivity to how my assumptions, biases, and methods shaped the study. My personal biases and assumptions with regard to race, class, gender, professional status, and position etc. were constantly evaluated and reflected upon during the study.

Ethical Considerations

During my study I attempted to ensure the safety, respect, and dignity of those who volunteered to participate in my research. I understand that not only does my professional career and reputation depend upon me conducting ethical research, but so do the reputations of the people and institutions with which I worked during this study. Therefore, to ensure that I conducted an ethical study, I ensured that my study was

approved by my dissertation committee and in accordance with Columbus State

University policies and procedures.

To conduct this study I also secured permission from the school district in which I

conducted the study. Much like Columbus State University, the participating school

district has rules and procedures which govern research that involves students and

teachers within the district. I secured permission and complied with these procedures to

ensure that I was ethical in my conduct and that I ensured the safety, dignity, and

anonymity of the participants. To maintain anonymity of all participants and participating

institutions, I used pseudonyms throughout the study.

Representation

This study was directed at and useful for a diverse audience. Therefore this study

was written to focus on the needs of a variety of readers, including students, researchers,

and teachers of qualitative research methods. The following are ways in which my study

and findings will be presented to meet the diverse needs of the readers:

Presentation of Data and Findings in Context

I will present data and findings within the context of the natural setting of the

study. This is to say that I have attempted to present the study in the natural and

sequential order in which it occurred. The natural re-presentation of events will allow the

reader to better follow the course of the study and to grasp a better understanding of the

researcher's and the participants' personal journeys and experiences within the study.

Spiraling of Concepts

In the presentation of my data and findings, I have spiraled from the simplest

concepts to the most complex. Naturally, this will allow the reader to better follow the

study. Spiraling from the simple to the complex will also allow the reader to gradually become acquainted with the study while not being overwhelmed in the beginning.

Grounding of Data and Findings

I have attempted to guide and ground the presentation of my data and findings through theory and methodology. Exposing the reader to the theoretical perspectives and methodologies that frame the study will allow the reader to remain focused within a frame of reference throughout the reading. I believe I have accomplished this in Chapter 1, the introduction of this study, as well as in Chapter 2, the literature review.

Logical and Dramatic Narrative

In the spirit and style of Coldren (2007) I have used logical narrative in combination with dramatic narrative. As stated, the main goal of this study was to examine the construct of distributed leadership, its relationship to student achievement, and how it shapes the practices of educators in relation to teaching and learning in schools. Logical narrative has allowed me to present this study in a logical sequence that allows the reader to easily follow the cases as they unfold. Dramatic narrative has allowed me to present this study in a way that creates in the reader a desire to continue to read and discover as if conducting the study with the researcher.

Descriptive and Inferential Statistical Representation

As stated previously, quantitatively I relied upon both descriptive and inferential statistical data, collected from teacher surveys and questionnaires, as well as from student performance and achievement data as measured by the Georgia CRCT. To ensure accurate analyses and conclusions drawn from the quantitative data, careful consideration was taken in the selection and employment of data collection instruments and statistical

testing. The final report of this study includes detailed sections outlining the instruments

and procedures used for the collection and analysis of quantitative data.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to examine the construct of distributed leadership

and how it shapes the experiences, practices, and agency of educators in relation to

teaching and learning in schools, as well as its relationship to student achievement. The

best way to get at how distributed leadership affects the practices of educators at GMS

and BES was to compare and contrast what school leaders and teachers in the schools do

in relation to what they say they do. To determine what school leaders and teachers do

that is illustrative of distributed leadership practices, the various leadership routines,

tools, structures, and interactions that educators utilize, and in which they engage and

participate, during the conduct of their daily educational work were analyzed and

observed. To guide and structure my analysis and findings, I used Coldren's 2007 work

as a model. Of great importance to understanding the distributed leadership practices of

educators, through an analysis of their various leadership routines, tools, structures, and

social interactions, is the understanding that these elements are directly influenced by the

situational interactions between leaders and followers (Coldren, 2007, and Spillane &

Diamond, 2007) at GMS and BES.

The following definitions for routines, tools, structures, and situation have been

used for this analysis. Mcbeth states that in relation to distributed leadership frameworks

and contexts, a *routine* involves multiple participants in a repetitive and observable

pattern of interdependent actions (2008). McBeth defines a *tool* as a tangible device that

serves to mediate and shape interactions between people, and between people and their

environment (2008). *Structure* is defined as the arrangement of or interrelation of all the

parts of an organization. Finally, McBeth (2008, p. 15) refers to Spillane's, Diamond's, and Jita's (2003) definition of the *situation* as "a unique set of content and dimensional criteria for which routines, tools, and structures create the interaction associated with leadership practice." This chapter contains descriptions of the prominent distributed leadership routines, tools, structures, and situational interactions between educators that were observed at both GMS and BES.

In comparison to what educators do, in this chapter I have also examined what educators say they do, by analyzing educator responses to interview questions, conversations during leadership and school improvement meetings, and responses to leadership impact surveys (See Appendices A and B). In a study such as this it is important to determine if there is congruence or disparity between what educators say they do and what they actually do with regard to distributed leadership activities and practices. This comparison approach has helped reveal and outline the essence and implications of distributed leadership practices at the participant schools, as well as serving as the foundation upon which I have based my analysis of how distributed leadership shapes the experiences, practices, and agency of educators at GMS and BES.

Finally, to determine the relationship between distributed leadership practices and student achievement, longitudinal student achievement data in math and reading was analyzed and examined for both GMS and BES as measured on the state standardized test. State standardized test scores in math and reading were used because these are the primary subjects for which the participant schools are held accountable for student achievement and adequate yearly progress (AYP) under the federal No child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Analysis of Distributed Leadership at Grantham Middle School

Coldren (2007), in reference to Cuban (1988), states that school principals, in their daily work and leadership activities, assume and play three critical roles: managerial, instructional, and political. The principal's role as a manager is to ensure the daily operational integrity of the school through such tasks as planning, budgeting, supervising, scheduling, and maintenance of facilities. The principal's role as the chief instructional leader of the school is to ensure the integrity and confluence of effective teaching and student learning, through such activities as developing and communicating the school's instructional vision, mission, and objectives. Other such principal instructional activities include the supervision and evaluation of teachers, promoting teacher and staff professional development, and ensuring that the state curriculum and standards are being taught and assessed in every classroom. In the political sense school principals regularly seek to maintain organizational homeostasis and improvement through the frequent interactions with parents, teachers and staff, students, other outside educational agencies, and the community at large.

Not surprisingly the three critical roles of the principal, as described above, have increased the burdens and expectations placed on school principals in leading successful schools. The burden that many principals carry is that of being an instructional leader while much of the principal's time and effort is consumed by the managerial and political aspects of the job. This burden often complicates and even prevents the principal's leadership practices from connecting directly to teaching and learning. Furthermore, the notion of "heroic leadership" is perpetuated when school principals are expected to be the

driving force in most if not all school improvement activities in schools. This is especially the case when a school experiences a change in leadership from a principal who has served at a school for many years and has employed traditional leadership practices in a top down model of leadership, to a new principal who is oriented more towards distributed leadership practices. In 2007 Grantham Middle School experienced just such a leadership change. When she assumed the role of principal at Grantham Middle School in 2007, Mrs. Susan Harris was no exception to the pressures and expectations of the notion of the heroic leader. Mrs. Harris had been a public educator for almost 20 years. Prior to assuming the role of principal at GMS, Mrs. Harris served successfully as an elementary teacher for nine years and as an assistant principal for over seven years. Mrs. Harris assumed the role of principal at Grantham when the previous principal retired after having served as Grantham's principal for more than 20 years. Prior to Mrs. Harris's arrival Grantham had a traditional top down leadership structure in which most leadership activities and school improvement initiatives originated from the principal's office. Also, Grantham's math and science scores had declined over the past years and were at the 60th percentile of students meeting or exceeding the standards on the state standardized test. The state was also in the middle of a roll out of new curriculum performance standards. In such a situation, the norm might be to expect a new principal to come in and "turn the school around", to provide all answers to all problems, or to mandate a new vision and mission. When asked about the pressures of taking on the position of principal, Mrs. Harris stated , "when there is the perception that anything that goes wrong is your fault, and that anything that goes wrong comes back on you, there is a pressure to be 'in control' and try to oversee everyone and everything all of the time." In

this instance, however, Mrs. Harris was the exception to the expected norm. She was the exception because she frequently commented, that first year as principal of Grantham, that for the first year she was going to try not to change anything, but rather attempt to learn everything she could about the school from the perspective of a new principal. She was also the exception to the heroic leader by deliberately and closely observing the daily routines and activities of the school. Finally, she was very conscious to listen to the constituencies of the school in order to gauge the perceptions of the school from various perspectives. Mrs. Harris commented:

> During my first year at Grantham I just tried to build relationships. Part of that was to listen to people and to observe and understand the sources of power at the school. I learned that power did not always reside in the most conspicuous places with the expected people. I realized that the janitor could definitely be a source of power.

Teachers at Grantham reported that it was apparent from Mrs. Harris's first day as principal at Grantham that she employed a different leadership style than that of her predecessor. Teachers recalled how she immediately began to make connections between everything she did as a leader and how her leadership practices affected teaching and learning in the classroom. One teacher reported that, "she will listen to you if you have a suggestion or a solution to a problem, but she is very quick in making on the spot corrections when someone or something is not right or does not meet the expected standard or adhere to the established routine." Still other staff members commented that, "she is passionately concerned about the academic achievement of the school and she fiercely defends and preserves the reputation of Grantham as a school that is first and foremost concerned about academics."

Immediately upon assuming the role of principal at Grantham, Mrs. Harris began to implement distributed leadership practices at the school. Leadership was quickly distributed across the three grade level assistant principals, three grade level counselors, teachers, and staff members. Principal and assistant principal duties and responsibilities were clearly defined and assigned. Counselors quickly became more involved in activities such as classroom guidance, parent communication and outreach, standardized testing, and various other student welfare and outreach initiatives. There was a new emphasis on the role of teachers as leaders at the school, subject area, and team levels. There was also a push for more parent involvement at the school through such activities as PTA and parent sponsorship of academic teams. The school leadership team was also emphasized as an integral component of school governance and oversight. Mrs. Harris commented:

> At the beginning I knew it was important to set new norms and expectations. For example, people who had never been in any type of leadership position before now found themselves on different teams and committees. I had to demonstrate to them how to have effective meetings. This was especially true with the school leadership team.

Not only did Mrs. Harris distribute leadership roles and responsibilities across various members of the Grantham faculty, staff, and community, but she effectively linked the distribution of leadership roles and responsibilities with new organizational routines and tools that she hoped would directly and positively impact instruction, assessment, and student achievement in the classroom. As mentioned earlier, at the time Mrs. Harris assumed the role of principal at Grantham, the school's math and science scores were on the decline. Furthermore, the state was in the process of rolling out a new curriculum with accompanying performance standards and instructional frameworks. It

was these situational contexts that necessitated the distribution of leadership roles and

responsibilities and the development of new organizational routines and tools at

Grantham. The new leadership roles combined with the new organizational routines and

tools defined the leadership practices at Grantham. The following is an analysis of

organizational routines and tools that were instituted at Grantham and are illustrative of

distributed leadership. In the analysis close attention is paid to how these routines and

tools define and are defined by the leadership practices of the educators at Grantham.

This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents

Though GMS was technically a middle school, it was not functioning effectively

as a middle school when Mrs. Harris became principal. To bring GMS in line with what a

successful and highly effective middle school should be, that first year at GMS Mrs.

Harris engaged the entire faculty in a professional learning community which focused on

the National Middle School Association's (NMSA) position paper (2010) *This We*

Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents. In this paper the NMSA describes the

nature of middle level educational programs that reflect what research and vast

experience have demonstrated to be best for 10 to 15 year olds. One key component

outlined in the *This We Believe* philosophy is the leadership and organization

characteristics. The leadership and organization of an effective middle level educational

setting should hold to the following ideals (NMSA, 2010):

- A shared vision developed by all stakeholders guides every decision.

- Leaders are committed to and knowledgeable about this age group, educational research, and best practices.

- Leaders demonstrate courage and collaboration.

- Ongoing professional development reflects best educational practices.

- Organizational structures foster purposeful learning and meaningful relationships.

Mrs. Harris used the *This We Believe* philosophy to unite the GMS staff under a common vision for the school, developed with input from all staff members. She emphasized that all staff members must be knowledgeable of the unique characteristics of adolescent learners. She emphasized that for continuous improvement to happen at GMS, staff members must collaborate as change agents. Mrs. Harris emphasized the importance of professional development and professional learning communities. Finally, Mrs. Harris demonstrated to the GMS staff the importance of having routines, procedures, and structures at GMS that were meaningful and exciting to adolescent learners, while still fostering their learning. When Mrs. Harris assumed the role of principal of GMS in 2007, it was apparent that the *This We Believe* philosophy became the cornerstone of the vision she had for GMS. It is also readily apparent how the *This We Believe* philosophy, with its emphasis on shared vision, collaboration, and meaningful relationships within schools, dove tails nicely with Mrs. Harris's distributed leadership style.

Common Subject Area and Grade Level Team Planning Routines

With declining math and science scores, and Grantham in the middle of a new state mandated curriculum and performance standards roll out, as a new principal, Mrs. Harris felt that the best way to influence change for sustained school improvement was to have everyone focused on the same instructional objectives and desired outcomes. Logic told Mrs. Harris that the new state standards based curriculum would better define student performance targets, and that if instruction and assessments could be planned to help students hit those performance targets, the math and science scores would ultimately improve. Though simple in theory, the difficulty laid in getting teachers all working

toward the same instructional goals. Most teachers had received state provided training

on how to unpack the new performance standards and implement the new curriculum.

The problem at Grantham was that individual teachers had different interpretation as to

how the new standards should be unpacked and what types of instructional and

assessment strategies should be used to bring about better student achievement within the

new curriculum.

To address this problem, the teachers of Grantham were introduced to common

grade level and subject area planning routines. In general, the routine called for all

teachers to meet with their respective grade level team on every Tuesday during their

planning periods. Likewise, every Thursday, all teachers would meet with their respective

grade level subject area teams during their planning periods. For example, on Tuesdays

the math teacher, language arts teacher, science teacher, and social studies teacher for

each team would meet to discuss, plan, and address team specific activities and issues.

On Thursdays every 7th grade math teacher would meet to discuss 7th grade math

curriculum, instruction, and assessment issues. Not only were teachers required to attend

the common planning sessions, but Mrs. Harris herself, and the assistant principals also

attended the common planning sessions when appropriate.

The intent of the common planning routine, on Mrs. Harris's part, was not to

tightly manage the teachers and the curriculum and instruction planning processes, but

rather to open the process up. Mrs. Harris reflected:

> I wanted the instructional planning process to be more synergistic. The teachers
> responded very positively. We all realized that we could plan better instruction
> and assessment with more input from more teachers. They are the content experts.
> Once they started sharing ideas and distributing the work load of planning, the
> positive results were immediately evident.

During any common planning meetings at Grantham, whether they be at the grade level, subject area, or grade level team levels, meeting participants were required to record and document minutes of the meetings on a common meeting form. The meeting minutes form was not intended to serve as a bureaucratic management tool or to simply be compiled in a notebook and serve as a historical record of the meetings. With the Grantham administrators regularly attending and participating in planning meetings and through review of the meeting minutes forms, Mrs. Harris and the assistant principals could better establish and maintain a more authentic connection between their work as administrators in improving teaching and learning at Grantham. The common planning routines provided Mrs. Harris, and the assistant principals of GMS, with a more authentic view of what actually happens in the classroom, better enabling them to monitor instruction and assessment - an essential leadership function.

Tables of Specificity as a Leadership Tool

As mentioned, in 2007 when Mrs. Harris assumed the role of the GMS principal, the state was in the middle of a state-wide standards based curriculum implementation for first grade through twelfth grade. Though the new performance standards were a vast improvement over the former common core curriculum, educators across the state were experiencing two main problems with the new performance standards. The first problem involved unpacking the standards and developing instructional units that were appropriately paced in order teach all of the required content in time for the state standardized test administered in April each year. The second problem was that though the new performance standards were more specific in outlining required content, they were often written in language that was difficult for students and parents to understand.

In a standards based curriculum it is important that students are exposed to and develop a rich understanding of the performance standards to be learned and performed. Educators across the state, as well as at GMS, struggled to meet these challenges of the new standards based curriculum.

At Grantham, their new common planning routines helped to address the problem of unpacking and the pacing of the standards. However, the Grantham teachers and administrators still needed to find ways to make the standards more relevant and student friendly. In October of 2007 a core group of teachers and administrators from Grantham had the opportunity to attend a series of state sponsored workshops by Dr. Tom Guskey (October. 2007). These workshops addressed how educators could better assess students for learning. One key focus of the Guskey workshop series was how to make performance standards and objectives in state curriculums more student friendly and attainable by students. A very effective tool that Guskey introduced was the table of specificity (TOS) (See Appendix C). In the simplest terms, Guskey's TOS model is a graphic organizer/tool designed to help educators specify essential content within targeted objectives that students, parents, and teachers better understand. Thus the logic is that more access to standards and content and a better understanding of the objectives and essential content translates into higher student achievement. One teacher's comments on the implementation of the TOS allowed that:

> At first we thought the TOS was just one more requirement and piece of paperwork that would burden teachers. However, once we saw the benefits of refining the often difficult to understand standards for students and parents, teachers got on board with the idea. The TOS helped teachers understand content. Therefore, we could plan better instruction and assessments. When we saw the benefits of this document, we started providing a copy to every student. We posted them outside of our classroom doors. We even put them on our websites so parents could see what students were supposed to be learning at school, and they

could help students at home. The TOS brought everyone together on what students should know and be able to do. The TOS is now an essential part of our planning and assessment.

At GMS the TOS has become an instructional and assessment tool that has

promoted the agency of teachers, administrators, students, and parents through

collaborative instructional planning and assessment processes.

Student Assessment Data as a Leadership Tool

Like other public schools, GMS is held accountable for student achievement on

state standardized tests. Like many schools struggling to meet AYP requirements under

NCLB Act of 2001, teachers and administrtators at GMS realized that it is not prudent to

wait until the standardized test results are published to determine if student achievement

has been adequate to meet AYP objectives. To address this problem, GMS designed and

implemented a nine weeks testing schedule in order to formulate a better understanding

of student achievement throughout the school year, so remedial procedures can be put in

place to address any instructional or student achievement issues prior to the high stakes

state exams.

Prior to 2007, GMS had a nine weeks testing schedule for each subject. At the

core of the testing schedule were the pre-tests and post-tests components. Essentially,

every teacher in every subject would administer a pre-test at the beginning of each nine

weeks term, and then administer a post-test at the end of each nine weeks term. At the

end of each term the teachers would compare the student scores from the pre-tests and

post tests. The process did include some basic test item analysis to determine which

topics or standard domains on which students performed well or on which students

needed improvement. According to administrators and teachers, this pre-test/posttest

process was helpful in determining student progress and achievement on content that had

been taught, but with an incomplete item analysis on the tests, it was very difficult to drill

down to root causes of poor student performance. It was difficult to gage weather

substandard student performance on a given assessment was due to a teacher instructional

problem, a curriculum alignment problem, or a student problem.

To address the problems with the basic pre-test posttest process, GMS adopted

and implemented a technological solution in 2008. In an attempt to better analyze the

nine weeks exam results in order to make better instructional decisions, GMS adopted the

RISO Data Tools System. The RISO Data Tools system is an electronic test scanning

system that allows teachers to build common assessments across subject areas that are

aligned to content standards. Teachers administered the assessments to students, then the

student exams were scanned. The RISO Data Tools system then provided almost

instantaneous test item analyses through several school, classroom, or individual student

reports. Through the various reports, teachers and administrators could better determine if

students were meeting content and performance standards. Teachers and administrators

could determine if substandard student performance was due to teacher instructional

issues and curriculum alignment shortfalls, or if poor student performance might be due

to various student problems. Since 2010, GMS has been using the RISO Data Tools

system on a five week assessment schedule. The idea being that administering common

subject assessments every five weeks will give teachers and administrators even more

timely data on student achievement, thus resulting in more timely interventions.

Administrtators and teachers at GMS have commented that the RISO system is far

from perfect and that the system does have shortcomings. Nonetheless, the RISO system

has helped teachers and administrators engage in more rich discussions about student

achievement and school improvement. Mrs. Harris believed that one of her main roles as

principal, and the main roles of the assistant principals at GMS, was to analyze and

examine test scores and achievement data to help teachers improve the instructional and

assessment programs of the school. She stated:

> I think my main role in the instructional process is that of facilitator. To look at
> student achievement data of all kinds and help teachers analyze results. It takes
> both teachers and administrators to have the types of discussions that will be
> productive in bringing about real student achievement and school improvement.
> We all work together in various teams to look at many different assessment
> results. We ask, "Where are our strengths and weaknesses?" "In what domains
> and on which standards do we need to improve?" We do this with assessments of
> all kinds, from our common 5 weeks assessments to the state standardized test
> results.

Mrs. Harris viewed multiple types of student achievement data with well defined

and communicated goals and objectives in mind. She viewed assessment data as

indicators of how teacher instructional strategies, grade level and subject area

assessments, and most everything else at the school overall, contributed to student

achievement and learning. Mrs. Harris and assistant principals would work extensively

with teachers to examine student achievement data, reveal contributing factors or root

causes of problematic student performance, and prescribe interventions to address the

problematic student achievement data. Some types of discoveries that were often made

were that instructional strategies needed to be changed, or that curriculum content needed

to be more closely aligned with classroom instruction. At times it was determined that the

assessments themselves needed to be modified with regard to depth of knowledge of test

items and alignment to standards. It is to say then, that student assessment data connected

Mrs. Harris with classroom instruction and assessment. This connection with teachers

influenced and shaped her interactions with teachers and had a defining effect on

leadership practices at GMS.

Teacher Practices and Perceptions of Distributed Leadership at GMS

Through conversations, observations, and the results of a leadership impact

survey, teachers at GMS revealed that generally they are supportive of and function well

within the distributed leadership structures of GMS. Though some teachers reported that

they initially experienced some concern about distributed leadership type practices and

structures, they have come to appreciate distributed leadership in their school. Teachers

reported that their initial concerns focused primarily on additional workloads that

distributed leadership practices seemed to place on them. Several teachers reported that

additional leadership responsibilities distracted them from some of the direct teaching

and learning responsibilities in their classrooms. Initially many Grantham teachers felt

that serving on school improvement committees and curriculum development committees

was too burdensome along with all of their other teaching responsibilities in the

classroom. Several teachers at Grantham matter-of-factly stated that they did not wish to

seek out leadership opportunities or hold leadership positions at the school. One teacher

expressed this sentiment in this way:

> If I wanted to serve as a leader in the school I would have become a school
> administrator. When Mrs. Harris first arrived at Grantham nothing changed for a
> while. However, into her second year as principal it was apparent that things
> began to change, and more and more was expected of teachers outside of their
> direct responsibilities in the classrooms. That second year it seemed like we were
> always meeting or attending professional development sessions of one kind or
> another. Also, the paper work increased. With the new RISO test scanning
> machine we had to re-write all of our nine weeks exams. The tables of specificity
> required more work too. Not to mention, everything we did in the classroom had
> to be supported by data. I know this is important, but some of us felt
> overwhelmed at how much we were being asked to do. Throughout the second

year that Mrs. Harris was here at Grantham, I struggled with many of the things that we were asked to do and my role as a teacher.

During interviews and conversations, several teachers at GMS expressed similar perceptions to the changes that Mrs. Harris introduced in her first two years at Grantham. However, more recently, in a leadership impact survey administered in 2011, responses from Grantham teachers revealed that they have become more accustomed to and appreciative of distributed leadership practices at the school.

Twenty three out of fifty teachers responded to the leadership impact survey provided to the GMS faculty. At a response rate of 46%, results from the leadership impact survey revealed that teachers have a positive perception of the distributed leadership structures and practices at Grantham. Over 80% of respondents on the survey reported that they do not expect the principal to be the sole decision maker at the school, and that teachers at the school are encouraged to take on leadership roles. Over 85% of respondents reported that when they take on leadership roles, formal leaders at the school listen to and implement their suggestion with regard to school improvement.

Respondents, at a rate of over 80%, reported that they felt empowered when they take on leadership roles. Furthermore, 85% of respondents felt that distributed leadership practices enhance teacher job satisfaction that in turn enhances teaching and learning in the classroom. Also of interest, is that almost 85% of respondents reported that formal leaders at the school have high expectations for collaboration among teachers, and that adequate professional development, adequate resources, and other supports are provided to teachers as they take on new leadership roles within the school. Not surprisingly, about 30% of teachers reported that they rarely or never seek out leadership roles at the

school. Also, approximately 45% of teachers felt that additional leadership roles and responsibilities that have been placed on teachers can be burdensome.

In an interview after the administration of the leadership impact survey, teachers were asked how distributed leadership practices at Grantham have changed their practices as teachers. The majority of teachers reported that the distributed leadership practices and responsibilities have influenced them to become more efficient in their classrooms due to the fact that they now see teaching and learning within the school differently. They seem to see the "big picture" of how all actions at the school can be related to increase student achievement. The majority of teachers also reported that they feel better supported by the formal leaders of the school as well as by other teachers due to the collaborative nature of their work.

Student Achievement Data

As noted, there are many variables and factors that impact student achievement in schools. Though it is difficult to isolate distributed leadership as a direct contributing factor to student achievement, it is important to look at student achievement data within the greater context of schools which purport to implement distributed leadership practices. For if student achievement is not positively affected by the distributed leadership practices implemented in a school, we must question the use distribute leadership practices in schools.

To help determine if and to what extent distributed leadership routines, tools, and structures had on student achievement at GMS, state standardized scores from the past four years were compared, analyzed, and examined. The premise here was to look at trends within state standardized test scores, in 7th and 8th grade math and reading, since

Mrs. Harris assumed the role of principal at GMS. This section outlines the results of these statistical analyses.

To compare the four consecutive years of reading and math test scores at GMS, a simple analysis of variance (ANOVA) test with a multiple comparison Scheffe` test was employed. The ANOVA test allowed for the comparison of multiple sets of data from independent samples to determine if significant differences exist in the mean scores between the sample data sets. The Scheffe` test allowed for the comparison of sample data sets of unequal size. The Scheffe` post hoc test was chosen because it is the most conservative of the post hoc tests. The Scheffe` post hoc test controls all possible error to 5%.

In the analysis of the GMS 7th and 8th grade reading and math scores, results from every ANOVA and post hoc Sheffe` statistical test revealed that there were significant differences between the mean scores in reading and math from 2008-2011. The ANOVA results for the GMS 7th grade reading scores revealed that with df=3, and with p=.05, the observed F=19.633> dist. F=2.60. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the mean scores (See Table 1). The post hoc Sheffe` multi comparison test revealed that the greatest difference in mean scores was the increase between 2008 and 2009 (See Table 2 and *Figure 2*). *Figure 2* also shows that though the mean score peaked in 2009 and decreased slightly in 2010, the mean score in 2011 was still significantly higher than in 2008. This shows an increase in student achievement from 2008-2011. *Figure 3* shows that the percentage of students who passed the state reading test increased from 2008-2011.

Table 1

Analysis of Variance for GMS 7th Grade Reading Scores, 2008-2011

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	29783.512	3	9927.837	19.633	.000
Within Groups	708961.520	1402	505.679		
Total	738745.033	1405			

Table 2

Post Hoc Sheffe` Multiple Comparison for GMS 7th Grade Reading Scores, 2008-2011

(I) Year	(J) Year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
2008	2009	-12.530(*)	1.724	.000
	2010	-6.117(*)	1.704	.005
	2011	-9.500(*)	1.680	.000
2009	2008	12.530(*)	1.724	.000
	2010	6.413(*)	1.715	.003
	2011	3.030	1.691	.361
2010	2008	6.117(*)	1.704	.005
	2009	-6.413(*)	1.715	.003
	2011	-3.383	1.671	.251
2011	2008	9.500(*)	1.680	.000
	2009	-3.030	1.691	.361
	2010	3.383	1.671	.251

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Figure 2. GMS 7th Grade Mean Reading Scores

GMS 7th Grade Mean Reading Scores

(Bar chart: vertical axis from 820 to 850 in increments of 5; horizontal axis years 2008–2011)

- 2008: approximately 824
- 2009: approximately 836
- 2010: approximately 830
- 2011: approximately 833

Legend: ▣ GMS 7th Grade Mean Reading Scores
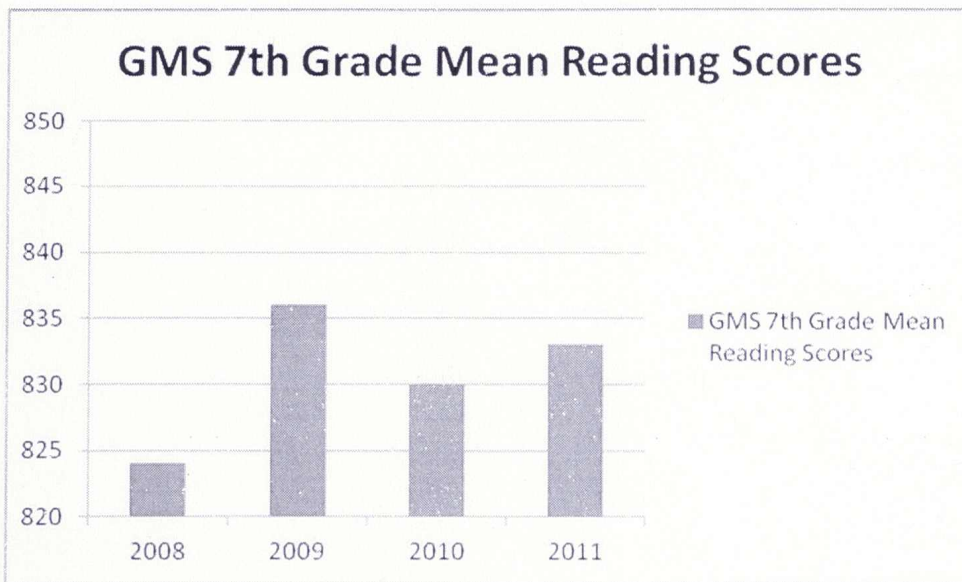
Figure 3. GMS 7th Grade Reading Scores

GMS 7th Grade Reading Scores

(Bar chart: vertical axis from 0 to 100 in increments of 10; horizontal axis years 2008–2011)

- 2008: approximately 89
- 2009: approximately 94
- 2010: approximately 93
- 2011: approximately 95

Legend: ▣ % of Students Who Passed the State Reading Test
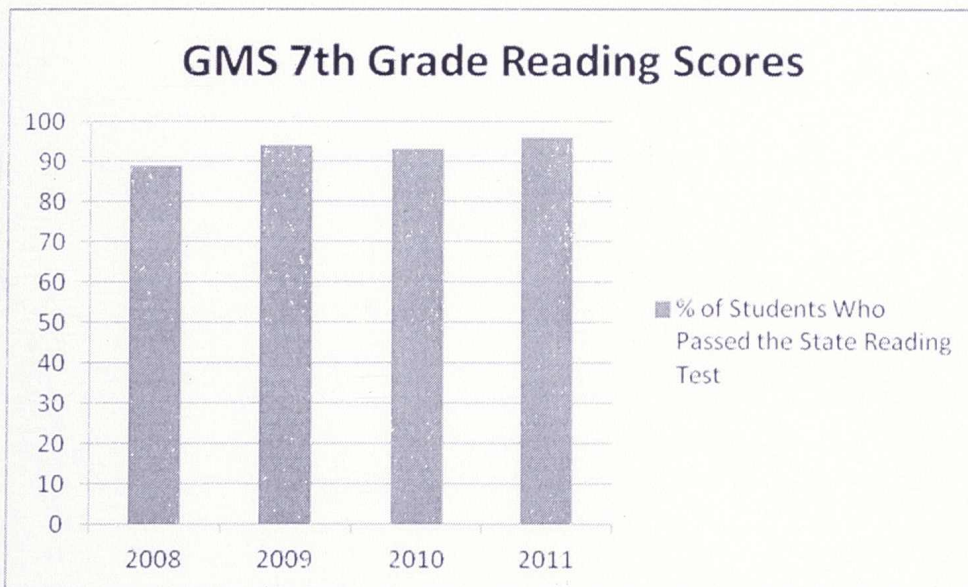
The ANOVA results for the GMS 7th grade math scores revealed that with df=3, and with p=.05, the observed F=94.248> dist. F=2.60. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the mean scores (See Table 3). The post hoc Sheffe` multi comparison test revealed that the greatest difference in mean scores was the increase between 2009 and 2011 (See Table 4 and *Figure 4*). This shows an increase in student achievement from 2008-2011. *Figure 5* shows that the percentage of students who passed the state math test increased from 2008-2011.

Table 3

Analysis of Variance for GMS 7th Grade Math Scores, 2008-2011

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	205209.864	3	68403.288	94.248	.000
Within Groups	1008109.493	1389	725.781		
Total	1213319.357	1392			

Table 4

Post Hoc Sheffe` Multiple Comparison for GMS 7th Grade Math Scores, 2008-2011

(I) Year	(J) Year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
2008	2009	9.902(*)	2.063	.000
	2010	-13.662(*)	2.057	.000
	2011	-21.439(*)	2.013	.000
2009	2008	-9.902(*)	2.063	.000
	2010	-23.564(*)	2.072	.000
	2011	-31.340(*)	2.029	.000
2010	2008	13.662(*)	2.057	.000
	2009	23.564(*)	2.072	.000
	2011	-7.776(*)	2.023	.002
2011	2008	21.439(*)	2.013	.000
	2009	31.340(*)	2.029	.000
	2010	7.776(*)	2.023	.002

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Figure 4. GMS 7th Grade Mean Math Scores 2008-2011

GMS 7th Grade Mean Math Scores

A bar chart showing GMS 7th Grade Mean Math Scores with a y-axis ranging from 800 to 850. The bars represent: 2008 ≈ 822, 2009 ≈ 812, 2010 ≈ 833, 2011 ≈ 843. Legend: GMS 7th Grade Mean Math Scores.
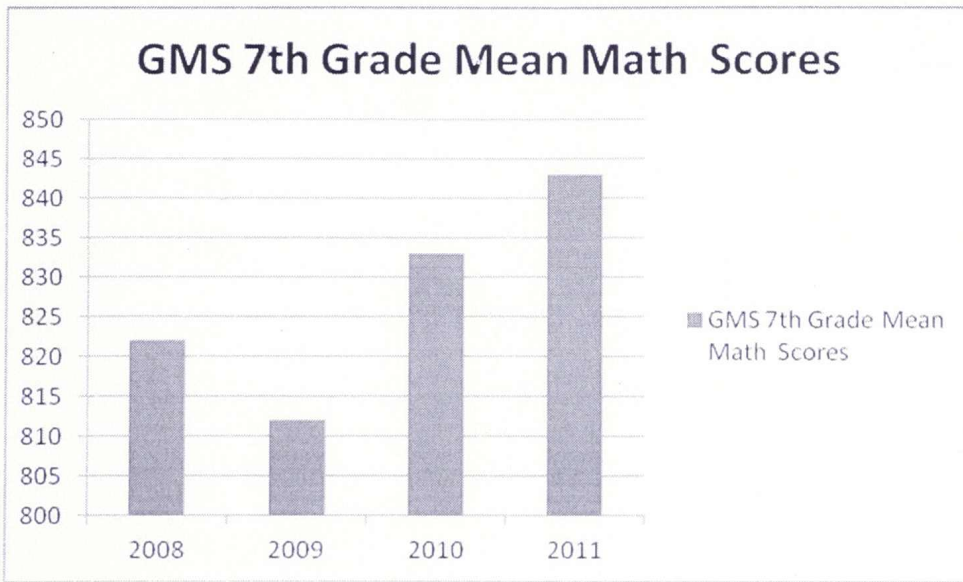
Figure 5. GMS 7th Grade Math Scores

GMS 7th Grade Math Scores

A bar chart showing GMS 7th Grade Math Scores with a y-axis ranging from 0 to 100. The bars represent: 2008 ≈ 79, 2009 ≈ 72, 2010 ≈ 90, 2011 ≈ 97. Legend: % of Students Who Passed the State Reading Test.
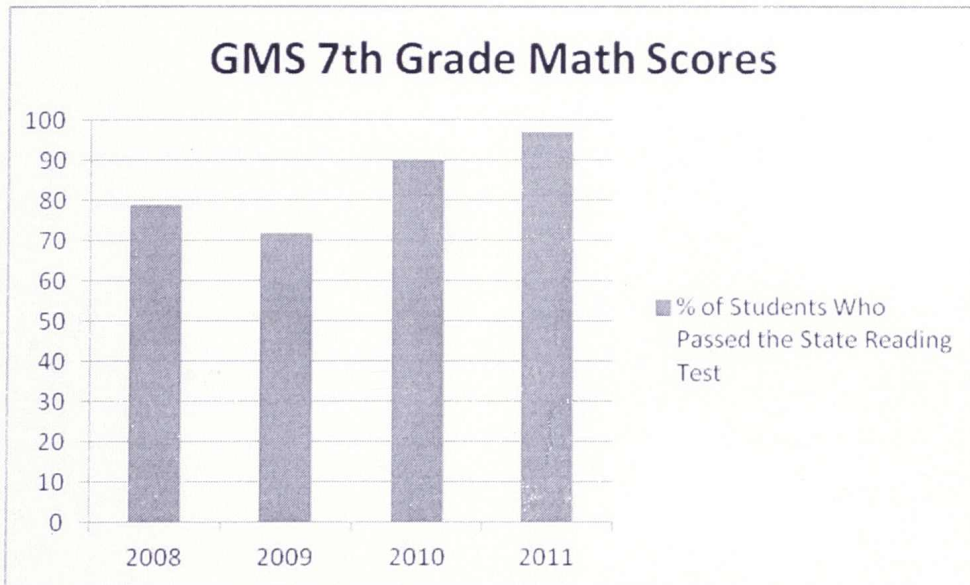
The ANOVA results for the GMS 8th grade reading scores revealed that with df=3, and with p=.05, the observed F=43.921> dist. F=2.60. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the mean scores (See Table 5). The post hoc Sheffe` multi comparison test revealed that the greatest difference in mean scores was the increase between 2009 and 2010 (See Table 6 and *Figure 6*). *Figure 6* also shows that though the mean score peaked in 2010 and decreased slightly in 2011, the mean score in 2011 was still significantly higher than in 2008. This shows an increase in student achievement from 2008-2011. *Figure 7* shows that the percentage of students who passed the state reading test increased slightly from 2008 to 2011.

Table 5

Analysis of Variance for GMS 8th Grade Reading Scores, 2008-2011

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	63005.159	3	21001.720	43.921	.000
Within Groups	681389.419	1425	478.168		
Total	744394.578	1428			

Table 6

Post Hoc Sheffe` Multiple Comparison for GMS 8th Grade Reading Scores, 2008-2011

(I) Year	(J) Year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
2008	2009	9.964(*)	1.624	.000
	2010	-6.408(*)	1.613	.001
	2011	-6.586(*)	1.620	.001
2009	2008	-9.964(*)	1.624	.000
	2010	-16.373(*)	1.654	.000
	2011	-16.551(*)	1.661	.000
2010	2008	6.408(*)	1.613	.001
	2009	16.373(*)	1.654	.000
	2011	-.178	1.651	1.000
2011	2008	6.586(*)	1.620	.001
	2009	16.551(*)	1.661	.000
	2010	.178	1.651	1.000

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Figure 6. GMS 8th Grade Mean Reading Scores, 2008-2011

GMS 8th Grade Mean Reading Scores

Legend: GMS 8th Grade Mean Reading Scores

(Bar chart, y-axis 815 to 845, x-axis years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011)
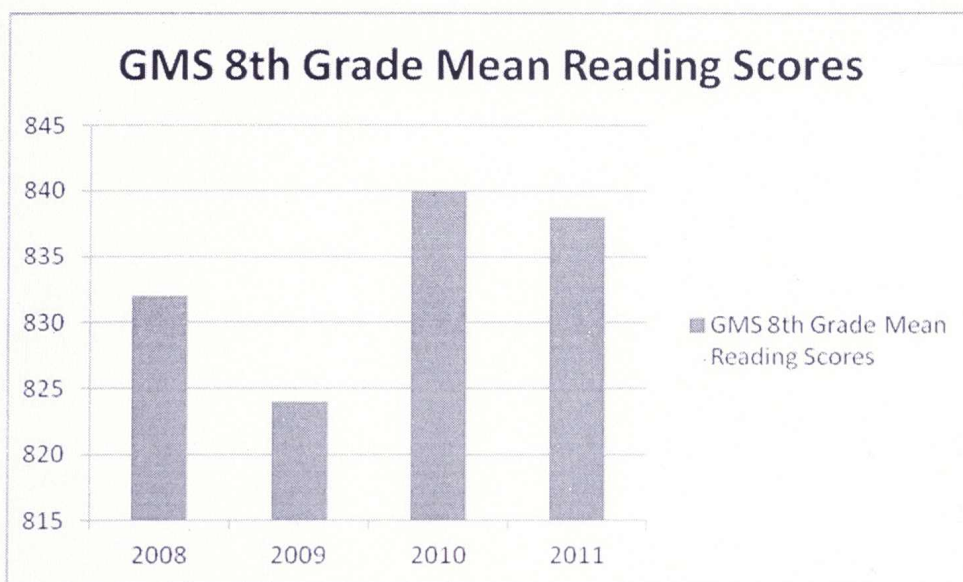
Figure 7. GMS 8th Grade Reading Scores, 2008-2009

GMS 8th Grade Reading Scores

Legend: % of Students Who Passed the State Reading Test

(Bar chart, y-axis 0 to 100, x-axis years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011)
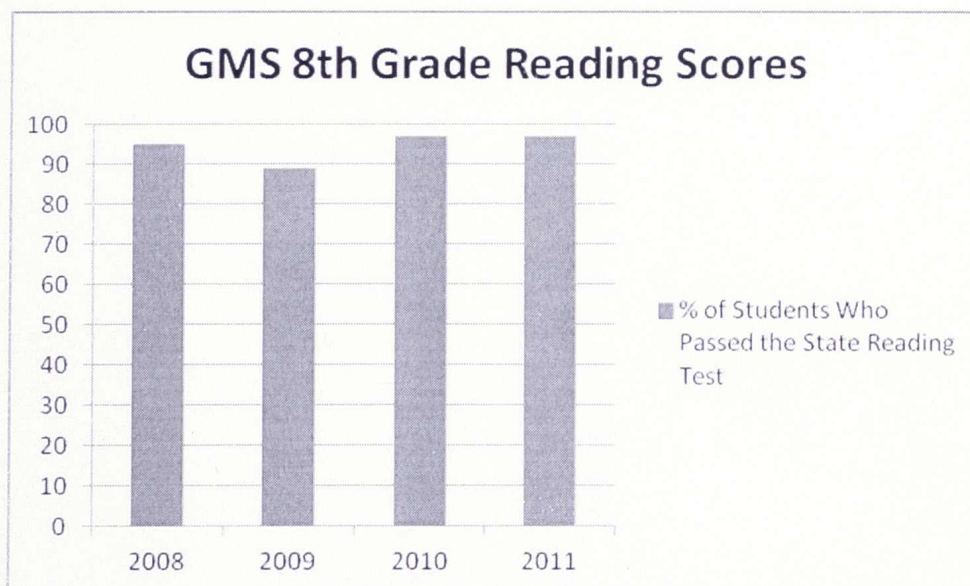
The ANOVA results for the GMS 8th grade math scores revealed that with df=3, and with p=.05, the observed F=12.447> dist. F=2.60. Therefore, there is a significant difference between the mean scores (See Table 7). The post hoc Sheffe` multi comparison test revealed that the greatest difference in mean scores was the increase between 2008 and 2011 (See Table 8 and *Figure 8*). *Figure 8* also shows that the mean score in 2011 was significantly higher than in 2008. This shows an increase in student achievement from 2008-2011. *Figure 9* shows that the percentage of students who passed the state math test increased from 2008-2011.

Table 7

Analysis of Variance for GMS 8th Grade Math Scores, 2008-2011

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	36286.793	3	12095.598	12.447	.000
Within Groups	1395424.207	1436	971.744		
Total	1431710.999	1439			

Table 8

Post Hoc Sheffe` Multi Comparison for GMS 8th Grade Math Scores, 2008-2011

(I) Year	(J) Year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
2008	2009	-11.873(*)	2.314	.000
	2010	-12.312(*)	2.300	.000
	2011	-8.436(*)	2.293	.004
2009	2008	11.873(*)	2.314	.000
	2010	-.439	2.357	.998
	2011	3.437	2.350	.544
2010	2008	12.312(*)	2.300	.000
	2009	.439	2.357	.998
	2011	3.876	2.337	.432
2011	2008	8.436(*)	2.293	.004
	2009	-3.437	2.350	.544
	2010	-3.876	2.337	.432

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Figure 8. GMS 8th Grade Mean Math Scores, 2008-2011

GMS 8th Grade Mean Math Scores
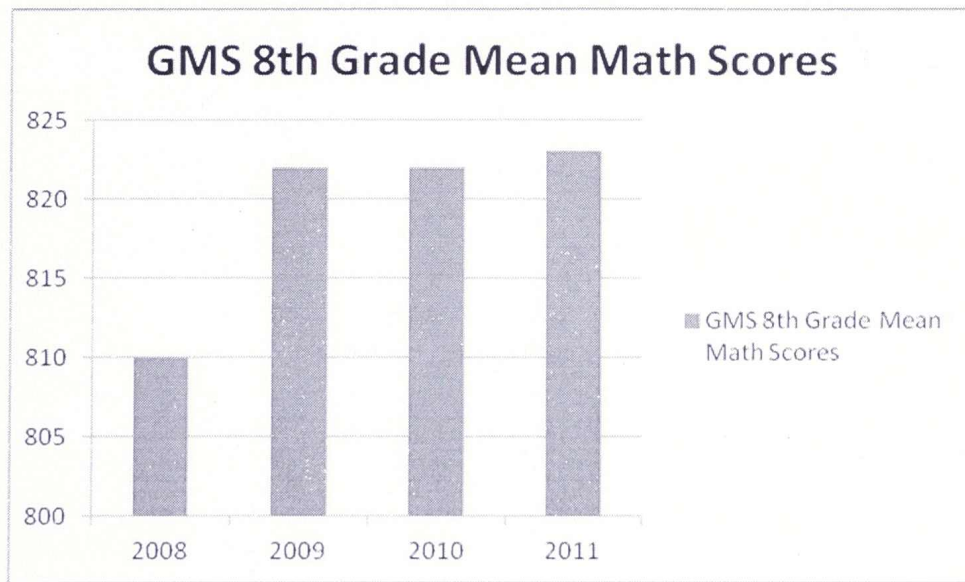
Figure 9. GMS 8th Grade Math Scores 2008-2011

GMS 8th Grade Math Scores
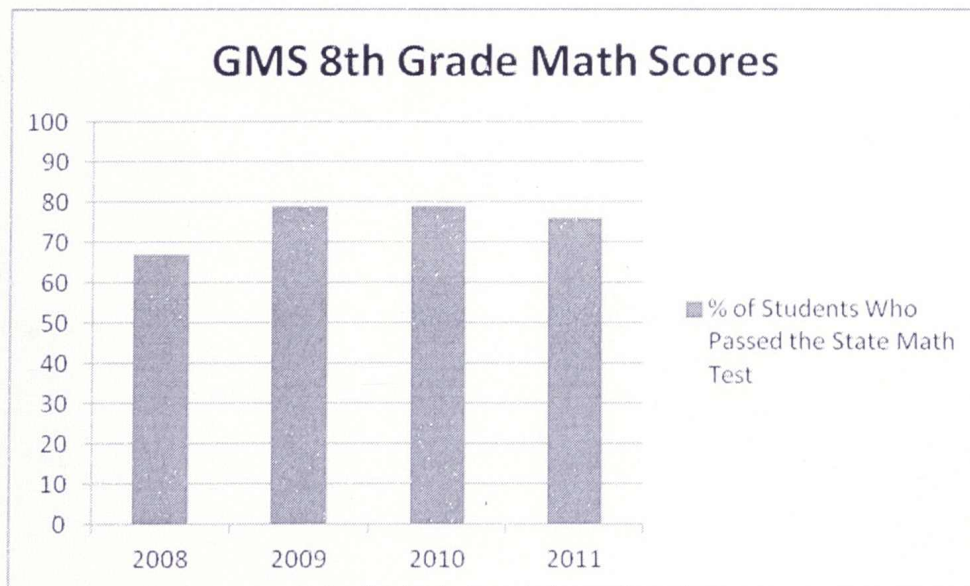
Analysis of Distributed Leadership at Bishop Elementary School

Much Like Mrs. Harris at Grantham Middle School, In December 2010 Mr. Frank Michaels, after serving as a middle school teacher for four years, a university instructor for three years, and as an assistant principal under Mrs. Harris at Grantham Middle School for three and a half years, assumed the position of principal at Bishop Elementary School. BES is located in the same public school system as GMS. Bishop too is a school that had operated for many years within traditional top down leadership frameworks. Mr. Michaels assumed the position of principal from an administrator who had been at Bishop for 13 years. In fact, Mr. Michaels's predecessor had been the only principal to serve at Bishop since it's opening in 1998.

Bishop Elementary is a school that has enjoyed a great reputation locally and in the region. Bishop's state standardized test scores have most always exceeded those of the state and have been adequate to make AYP under the NCLB guidelines. However, as the annual measurable objectives (AMO) have increased each year toward the NCLB goal of 100% of students passing the state standardized test in 2014, Bishop's 2010 test scores in math for all students, and in reading and math for the low socioeconomic subgroup were such that they could be in danger of not making AYP in 2011. Like Mrs. Harris, Mr. Michaels quickly and dramatically felt the managerial, instructional, and political pressures associated with a new principalship. According to Mr. Michaels, the temptation to come in and "take control" of the school was very real. Mr. Michaels stated:

> As a new principal there was an intense feeling of the need to appear that I was in control of everything and that I could solve any problem that presented itself at the school. Traditional leadership training had indoctrinated me in the belief that everything at the school rises and falls with the leadership actions of the principal.

It was quickly apparent that this simply was not the case. It didn't take long to realize that I didn't know everything and that I was not the originator of solutions to every problem. I am thankful that Mrs. Harris gave me some good advice before going to Bishop, that advice being to not make any major changes that first year unless they were absolutely necessary. My time as an assistant principal and my education leadership classes and degree absolutely did not prepare me for many of the realities of serving as a principal. I do not think anyone can truly comprehend the nature of the position until they experience it.

Mr. Michaels recalled the advice that the system superintendent gave him upon being notified that he had been selected as the new principal of BES. The superintendent suggested that Mr. Michaels not go into his new position like a "knight in shining armor" ready to fix all of the problems of the school, but rather begin to address problems by initiating and engaging in conversations. In the same manner, the superintendent suggested that Mr. Michaels gather information about problems by asking questions to stimulate discussions. Mr. Michaels stated:

Following this advice was the key to a smooth transition as a new principal. In utilizing this approach it was not long before I began to feel like the teachers trusted me and that I valued their opinions and expertise. Once the communication door was open through conversation and questions, there was an outpouring of suggestions and ideas about how to sustain success in the areas in which BES was highly successful and how to improve the few areas in which BES needed to improve to be a truly exceptional school.

As was the case at GMS with Mrs. Harris, it was the situational contexts that confronted Mr. Michaels in his new position as the BES principal that prompted him to distribute leadership roles and responsibilities and to develop some new organizational routines and tools at Bishop. According to Mr. Michaels, "every attempt was made to allow these new distributed leadership routines and tools to emerge naturally." In this spirit Mr. Michaels stated, "No matter where the ideas or suggestions came from, as long as they helped our students and improved our school that was the goal." The following is an analysis of organizational distributed leadership routines and tools that were instituted

at BES. In the analysis close attention is paid to how these routines and tools define and

are defined by the leadership practices of the educators at Bishop and how they make

connections to student achievement.

Open School-wide Communication Routine

One of the first actions Mr. Michaels took as a new principal was to assess the

needs of BES with regard to how teachers and parents perceived the school, curriculum

needs, facility needs, professional development needs, and what parents and teachers

expected from Mr. Michaels as principal of BES. The very first week in his new position,

Mr. Michaels posted a survey for BES teachers (Appendix D) and a survey for BES

parents (Appendix E). Both surveys were in electronic online format. Respondents for

both surveys could remain completely anonymous.

The teacher needs assessment survey served two purposes:

1. Mr. Michaels wanted to assess the needs and dispositions of the teaching staff

    in order to provide them with materials and instructional support that are

    essential to maintaining the quality of instruction and service at BES.

2. Mr. Michaels wanted to immediately establish open lines of communication

    between the staff and administration.

His intent was to immediately begin to give more voice and agency to the staff in the

operations of the school. Mr. Michaels stated:

> As a new principal I knew my biggest challenge would be to not hinder or disrupt
> the successful practices already in place at BES. The teachers and staff, I hoped,
> would tell me what they needed and what needed to be done at the school to
> continue to be successful in the areas where we were already successful.
> Likewise, I hoped that they would be forthright in communicating to me the
> things they needed and the actions that needed to be taken at the school in order to
> improve in areas in which they felt we needed to improve. For the most part, the
> staff was very honest and forthcoming in the survey. I was able to develop a

clearer picture of the actions I needed to take as a new principal to better support and influence continued success and improvement initiatives at BES."

From the teacher needs assessment survey Mr. Michaels discovered that most of the teachers considered BES to be superior school with a great staff and a great facility. However, many of the teachers expressed in their responses that they desired better communication between the school administration, teachers, and staff. They also desired to have more input into all of the on goings at Bishop to include curriculum decision making, program development, duty assignments, student incentive activities, and the development of various school committees. The main thing that teachers claimed they needed was for the school administration to value their efforts and listen to their ideas. Many of the respondents called for mutual trust and respect between the administration and the teachers.

Like the teacher needs assessment survey, soon after arriving at BES Mr. Michaels also sought to better understand parent perceptions of BES through a parent survey. Employing the parent survey Mr. Michaels wanted to (a) gauge parent perceptions of the school in order to better understand what actions to take as new principal in continuing the success of the school, as well as what actions to take toward needed improvements at BES. (b) Like with the teachers and staff, Mr. Michaels wanted to give more voice to the parents in the type of school they desire for their children. Mr. Michaels believes:

> Parent support is vital to the success of schools. I wanted to quickly open and establish positive communications channels with parents so they would first and foremost be better informed, but also feel that they have input into what goes on here at school that affects their children. After all, the school belongs to the parents too.

From the parent survey Mr. Michaels discovered that parents also perceived

Bishop as a superior school with superior teachers, a challenging curriculum, and safe

and well maintained facilities. Many of the parents did express, however, the need for

improved communications between teacher and parents and between the school and

parents. With regard to improved communications parents wanted the improved

communications to be technology driven such as mass emails and automatically

generated student reports that can be viewed online. The survey results also showed that

parents were concerned about the culture of the school. They highlighted the need for a

more developmentally appropriate school culture and atmosphere. Parents and teachers

alike, shared that they wanted Bishop to be more like an elementary school, where

students experience a fun, active, and challenging learning experience.

Not only did Mr. Michaels provide teachers and parents with opportunities to

express their opinions and needs through a needs assessment soon after he became the

principal of BES, he also provided all stakeholders with an end of the year survey (See

Appendices F and G) in order to measure and determine if progress was made toward the

suggestions made in the needs assessment surveys at the beginning. Though the end of

the year surveys revealed opportunities for improvement, both new and old, the overall

tone of the survey responses was positive with regard to improved communications

between school stakeholders. On the end of the year teacher survey (Appendix F)

teachers generally commented that they appreciated Mr. Michaels's open door policy and

that he is always available to address their concerns or needs. Many teachers commented

about how Mr. Michaels is very visible in the school and classrooms. Most of all,

teachers expressed their appreciation that the new administration was allowing more

shared leadership at the school.

Like the teachers, parent comments on the end of the year parent survey

(Appendix G) were mostly positive with regard to communications between the school

and parents. Of all of the respondents on the end of the year parent survey, 76%

responded that the school effectively communicates with parents. Though the end of the

year parent survey results show that parents desire improved communications, especially

through electronic means, the responses show that communication is improving at BES

since Mr. Michaels's arrival. One parent's comments sum up the attitude of many others

when they stated, "the school now seems to have the willingness and ability to

communicate and to be very open and clear with the communication, leaving no room for

misunderstanding." Not all parent comments on the end of the year survey were positive

with regard to communications. Several parents still expressed concerns that certain

individual teachers were not very effective at communicating with parents.

Common Grade Level Planning Routine

When Mr. Michaels arrived at BES in the late fall of 2010, the teachers at BES

did meet as grade level teams to discuss curriculum and instruction issues. However,

different grade level teams met on different days, and school wide the grade level teams

had many different meeting schedules. Additionally there was little input from

administrators as to what was discussed at the various grade level meetings. Initially, Mr.

Michaels did attempt to attend the grade level meetings, but found it difficult to attend as

many meetings as he would have liked to because they were on many different days and

at different times. Mr. Michaels expressed his thoughts on the grade level meetings by

stating:

> Initially, I felt very disconnected from the grade level teams and the curriculum
> and instructional planning processes happening school wide. I did not want to be
> involved in the grade level planning meetings so that I could micromanage and
> control the process, but rather I simply wanted to be part of the conversations and
> give input and insight into the process. I feel it is important for teachers and
> administrators to work together in the curriculum and instructional development
> processes. As a new elementary school principal, I needed to learn, from the
> teachers, about schooling at the elementary level. Likewise, from talking to the
> teachers, I felt that they could learn from me about the use of data to make
> instructional decisions. I also felt that the teachers did not have a developed
> awareness of the Adequate Yearly Progress requirements under NCLB, and how
> curriculum alignment and student intervention systems would help us meet our
> school improvement and achievement goals.

After much discussion, the teachers and administrators at Bishop mutually agreed

that the grade level planning meetings needed to become a routine in the weekly schedule

of the school. To both teachers and administrtators it seemed reasonable to have two

planning periods, each week, dedicated to common planning at each grade level. Grade

level teams, it was decided, would meet on each Tuesday and Thursday during the grade

level planning period. This common grade level planning routine would provide teachers

with desperately needed time to plan effective instruction and assessment closely aligned

to the state curriculum, while at the same time allowing administrators to be able to plan

around busy schedules in order to attend and participate in these important planning

meetings. Mr. Michaels elaborated:

> I can now plan my entire Tuesday and Thursday schedules around common
> planning meetings. I can plan to attend grade level meetings throughout the entire
> day or I can give the teachers their space to plan and discuss curriculum and
> instruction issues without me present. I now feel much more connected to the
> entire curriculum planning process at the school. Teachers have told me that they
> appreciate the dedicated and structured planning time and the participation and
> interest of administrators. I have been thrilled at how the common planning
> routines have allowed teachers and administrators to build authentic and

productive working relationships. The common planning routine has allowed us all to better connect our daily work to teaching and learning in the school.

Though the common planning routine at Bishop has had mostly positive results, the new planning routine has not been implemented without some difficulties. The main difficulty experienced in implementing the common planning routine, has been developing the process with individual teachers. Naturally when individual teachers are asked to go from a planning environment in which they solely plan individual lessons according to how they have individually interpreted and unpacked the required performance standards, there will be some tension and discomfort when these teachers are asked to work together to develop common grade level lessons and common assessments based on a group interpretation of required performance standards and frameworks. "This simply takes some teachers out of their comfort zone." Mr. Michaels added. Some teachers were worried that the school was going to a "cookie cutter" approach to instruction and that they would not be able to bring their individual teaching styles into their classroom instruction. Teachers and school administrators both have reported that with both participating in the common planning meetings, many of the described difficulties of the process are overcome with face to face interactions between teachers and administrators, allowing all to express concerns when they arise, and allowing all to provide timely clarification on issues that arise. With regard to the common planning process and routine, teachers frequently hear Mr. Michaels explain that, "it's a process, and in the process it is good and healthy to have disagreements, discussions, and conversations."

Week at a Glance Instructional Review Tool and Routine

At Bishop, an important organizational tool and routine that directly emerged from the common grade level planning routine was the Week at a Glance lesson planning form and routine. Prior to Mr. Michael's arrival at BES, teachers were required to have lesson plans for daily instructional activities, however there was little consistency in the requirements and implementation of the lesson plans at the classroom level. Rarely were lesson plans checked by administrators. Furthermore and in most cases, each individual teacher created their own lesson plans with little input or review from their colleagues on how effectively the lesson plans and resulting instructional activities were aligned to performance standards that outlined the state curriculum. To address the lesson planning issues, Mr. Michaels introduced the Week at a Glance lesson planning form (See appendix H) and routine to the teachers at Bishop. Mr. Michaels had seen the success of the Week at a Glance process during his time at Grantham.

Mr. Michaels introduced the Week at a Glance lesson planning form and routine in an attempt to better lead and manage instruction for better student achievement. Mr. Michaels hoped that he and the teachers, working collaboratively, could help the mundane routine of lesson planning evolve into a collective routine that would connect the work of both teachers and administrators to improve instruction in the classroom. Mr. Michaels summed up the Week at a Glance lesson planning routine this way:

> I wanted the Week at a Glance planning tool and routine to actually relieve some of the burdens of lesson planning from the individual teacher by bringing grade level teachers together in conversations and discussions about common instructional activities and essential content. The Week at a Glance tool has also helped bring administrators closer to the teaching and learning in the classrooms. For example, grade level teachers use the Week at a Glance form to plan instruction in all subject areas that is closely aligned to standards, they turn the completed forms into the administration, the administrators can in turn use the

forms to quickly and effectively determine to what degree instruction in the classrooms is addressing prescribed standards and essential content.

Mr. Michaels's practice of collecting and reviewing the Week at a Glance forms was not just another paper work requirement for teachers so that administrators could control and micromanage the actions of teachers, but rather it was a tool that brought forth a planning routine that enabled him to make a direct connection to his administrative work and classroom practice. With the Week at a Glance routine, teachers demonstrated more accountability in following their lesson plans. They also developed a better understanding of why they were teaching certain content and underlying structures and logic of the curriculum. In turn, Mr. Michaels and the assistant principal were better able to monitor content coverage with respect to state goals and standards frameworks.

Teachers have commented that the Week at a Glance routine has not only made the instructional planning process more efficient by relieving them of unnecessary paper work, but that it also has helped them better interact with the established curriculum, as well as clearly understand Mr. Michaels's expectations for instruction in the classroom. Teachers explained that if Mr. Michaels dropped by their classrooms that he expected them to be teaching the standards outlined in the Week at a Glance form. Being able to carry the Week at a Glance forms submitted by each grade level, Mr. Michaels could easily evaluate and manage instruction and assessment across the entire school. The Week at a Glance planning routine and tools, combined with mutual feedback from teachers and administrators, helps frame and focus ongoing interactions between Mr. Michaels and the teachers, the ultimate goal being increased student achievement.

The Master Schedule as a Leadership Tool

The purpose of any school's master schedule is to efficiently structure and allot time during the school day to maximize instruction in the classroom that results in student achievement. Though maximizing instructional time in a school's master schedule is the key purpose, other essential daily activities such as lunch, teacher planning, and special classes are necessary factors to consider when planning and developing a master schedule. Balancing the need to maximize instructional time with the need to include other essential activities in a school day is often very difficult when developing a school's master schedule. The development of Bishop's master schedule for the 2011-2012 school year was no exception.

Results from an end of the year survey (2010-2011 school year) of Bishop teachers indicated that the teachers at BES wanted and needed more uninterrupted instructional time during the school day. In addressing this request from the BES teachers, Mr. Michaels began to analyze and dissect the master schedule in a hopeful attempt to find more instructional time for the teachers. Though Mr. Michaels discovered some time in the master schedule that might be converted to instructional time, he knew:

> As a new principal and new to the elementary level, I wanted to make sure that before I just changed the master schedule, that I understood why the current schedule was the way it was. Though I found many places in the master schedule where I felt we were not using our time effectively for instruction, and before I solely made a change in the schedule for the 2011-2012 school year, I first wanted make sure the teachers had input into any changes that would be made.

To ensure that teachers had input into changes to the master schedule, Mr. Michaels first presented ideas that he had for changes to the master schedules as discussion agenda items at the BES leadership team meetings. Mr. Michaels explained the leadership team meetings this way:

I wanted to continue to take the advice I had been given to present and address changes at the school as discussions and conversations. The changes that I hoped to see in the master schedule were no exceptions. My conceptualized changes to the master schedule could invoke different reactions from different people in the school. So, I tried to introduce each change to the schedule as a question that would lead to discussion and conversation.

Changes that Mr. Michaels brought to the leadership team for discussion included extending teacher planning time by ten minutes each day. He also introduced the idea of cutting down the amount of time that teachers were currently using to transition students from the regular classroom to other activities such as lunch and specials classes like art, music, and physical education. Mr. Michaels also introduced to the teachers that recess would be given 20 minutes on the schedule for each grade level and that the 20 minutes needed to be strictly adhered to. Additionally, Mr. Michaels, with the assistance of the assistant principal, rearranged the master schedule so that transitions to specials classes, lunch, and recess took place in succession on the schedule. By structuring the schedule in this way, larger blocks of uninterrupted instructional time were made possible for each grade level. Finally, Mr. Michaels emphasized the need for instruction to continue up until the end of the school day at 2:30pm, where in the past, instruction had been ending as early as 2:00pm to begin to prepare students to leave at the end of the day.

The discussion process on changes to the master schedule took several weeks. However, in the end both teachers and administrtators agreed on the changes that they had collaboratively developed. Several teachers at BES have commented that though there is no perfect schedule, and that there is only so much time in the day to do everything that schools and teachers are asked to do, the master schedule that has emerged from the development process is a great framework for the daily instruction and other activities at Bishop. Many teachers also commented that they appreciated having

input into a process and structure that dramatically affects everything they do every day.

Mr. Michaels and the assistant principal reported that the process of developing the

master schedule has helped build a closer working relationship with the teachers, and that

they feel more connected to the instructional activities of the school.

Student Assessment Data as a Leadership Tool

Since the beginning of NCLB in 2011, the standardized test scores at BES have

always exceeded AMOs that are used to calculate AYP. Though as the AMOs have

increased each year toward the goal of 100% of students meeting or exceeding standards

on state standardized tests in 2014, BES has increasingly struggled to stay ahead of the

increasing AMOs in math in particular. Mr. Michaels explained the situation this way:

> After viewing the 2010 state standardized test scores for Bishop, I realized that if
> we kept doing what we were doing, that we were not going to make AYP in 2011.
> We were in danger of not making AYP in math and in our low socioeconomic sub
> group. First of all, my most startling discovery was that the teachers as a whole
> did not know how the AYP system under NCLB worked. They did not have a
> good understanding of the AMOs or student subgroups. Second, the teachers and
> administrtators at Bishop had no benchmark indicators during the year to help
> gauge if students were on the right track to pass the state test. In essence we were
> simply hoping and waiting at the end of the year for the test scores to come back
> and that they would show good results.

To help teachers better understand the AYP process under NCLB, Mr. Michaels

conducted grade level data meetings when the 2011 state test scores were available. With

these scores Mr. Michaels sat down with each group of grade level teachers and

thoroughly explained the AYP process under NCLB, and how indicators such as

attendance, subgroups, and AMOs were factored into the process.

In August of the 2011-2012 school year, Mr. Michaels invited the district assistant

superintendant and a district curriculum specialist to come to Bishop and further explain

and present the AYP process to each grade level team, but also to drill down into student

achievement scores at each grade level by domain and teacher. Each teacher in each

grade level was provided with a data report for their grade level that disaggregated

student achievement data and AYP data in detail. In Mr. Michaels's opinion, these

meetings served to "put everyone on the same page with regard to how AYP and school

success was determined." Teachers found the analysis of student achievement data by

domain and teacher very "eye opening." One teacher commented:

> The data meetings helped clear up a mysterious process for us. Once we
> understood the process and how student achievement data can be disaggregated
> and analyzed, we felt that we now had some better ideas to help us plan
> instruction for the upcoming year.

As mentioned earlier, Mr. Michaels saw a need for formative benchmark

indicators of student achievement throughout the year as well as the summative indicator

of student achievement, the state standardized test. Coincidentally, in 2010 the district

began to conceptualize and develop benchmark indicators for all elementary schools in

the district. Over several months in 2010 and 2011, 1st through 4th grade teachers from all

four elementary schools in the district collaborated to write questions for the formative

benchmark assessments. Every teacher involved in developing the benchmark

assessments attended several training sessions in which they were trained on how to write

effective assessment questions at varying depths of knowledge levels.

Once effective questions had been developed and written for reading, language

arts, math, and science benchmark assessments, the benchmark assessments themselves

were developed using the RISO Data Tools programs. As discussed earlier, the RISO

Data Tools program was introduced to the district by Mrs. Susan Harris and her staff. The

district adopted this program and implemented it district wide. As discussed previously

The RISO Data Tools system is an electronic test scanning system that has allowed for

the development of the district benchmark tests that are aligned to content standards and state pacing guides. The assessments are administered to students, then the exams are scanned. The RISO Data Tools system then provides almost instantaneous test item analyses through several school, classroom, or individual student reports. Through the various reports, teachers and administrators can better determine if students are meeting content and performance standards. Through better formative student achievement data, teachers and administrators can better determine if substandard student performance is due to teacher instructional issues and curriculum alignment shortfalls or if poor student performance might be due to various student problems.

Teacher Practices and Perceptions of Distributed Leadership at BES

Much like the teachers at Grantham Middle School, teachers at BES have also revealed that in general they are supportive of and function well within the distributed leadership structures that have been introduced at BES since 2010. Though generally teachers at BES view the distributed leadership practices positively, several reported in an end of the year teacher survey in May 2011, that they feared change at the school was happening too fast and that Mr. Michaels might be "micro managing" too many aspects of the school such as teacher planning time, the master schedule, and content to be taught in the classroom. Several teachers commented that they feared an increased workload from additional requirements such as common planning meetings and the week-at-a-glance lesson outlines. Though some teachers expressed their fears and concerns about the new distributed leadership type practices and structures, they too have come to appreciate distributed leadership in their school. Like at GMS, several Bishop teachers

reported that their initial concerns focused primarily on additional workloads that distributed leadership practices would demand of them.

Not surprisingly, several Bishop teachers reported that additional leadership responsibilities took their focus and time away from critical instructional and assessment work that directly impacted the teaching and learning in their classrooms. As new leadership structures were implemented at BES through various school improvement initiatives, several teachers expressed to Mr. Michaels their concern about being overworked. Once at a faculty meeting, one teacher directly and overtly asked Mr. Michaels: "How can you reasonably expect us to do all that you are asking us to do?"

During interviews and conversations at planning meetings during the end of the 2010-2011 school year, several of the BES teachers expressed their fears and concern that changes that have been introduced since Mr. Michaels' arrival at Bishop might lead to an unsustainable workload for them as teachers, not to mention the expectations that Mr. Michaels has had for teachers to serve in leadership roles at the school.

More recently, however, in a leadership impact survey administered late in 2011, responses from Bishop teachers revealed that they have become more accustomed to and appreciative of distributed leadership practices at the school. Fifteen of 30 teachers responded to the leadership impact survey provided to the BES teachers. At a response rate of 50%, results from the leadership impact survey revealed that teachers generally have a positive perception of the distributed leadership structures and practices at Bishop. Over 85% of respondents on the survey reported that it is unrealistic to expect the school principal to initiate and lead every school improvement initiative. Additionally, 85% of respondents answered that teachers should be and are encouraged to take on leadership

responsibilities at BES. Almost 95% of respondents at BES reported that when teachers take on additional leadership roles that teacher job satisfaction is enhanced. Furthermore, 99% of BES respondents answered that distribution of leadership roles enhances instruction and student achievement. An interesting piece of data was revealed in that only 60% of BES teacher respondents felt empowered when they took on leadership roles. Only about 30% of respondents reported in the survey that leadership roles placed on teachers can become a burden for teachers.

With regard to how leadership roles are distributed at BES, and how leaders support teacher leaders with resources and professional development, the results of the leadership impact survey were mostly positive. One hundred percent of respondents reported that there were high expectations for collaboration among teachers and leaders. Furthermore, 100% of respondents reported that leaders do a good job procuring resources for teacher leaders to perform their designated roles. Over 95% of respondents felt that school leaders did an adequate job of providing resources and professional development in order for them to fulfill their leadership and teaching responsibilities.

During interviews after the administration of the leadership impact survey, Bishop teachers were asked how distributed leadership practices at BES have changed their practices as teachers. Teachers reported that they were gaining a better feel for the collaboration among colleagues that distributed leadership practices require. Where some teachers were comfortable working in isolation, they now say they depend upon the collaboration with their colleagues to promote better learning environments. Many teachers also reported that they feel they now have a voice in what goes on at the school. One teacher summed it up this way, "At Bishop you have the opportunity to be a leader if

that is what you want. As a leader at Bishop you get your ideas heard. However, some teachers prefer to remain followers. That is fine too."

Bishop Elementary Student Achievement Data

To help determine if and to what extent distributed leadership routines, tools, and structures had on student achievement at BES, state standardized scores from 2008-2011 were compared, analyzed, and examined in much the same way as the scores were examined from GMS. The premise here was to look for trends within state standardized test scores, in 3rd and 4th grade math and reading before and after Mr. Michaels assumed the role of principal at BES, and distributed leadership practices were implemented at the school. This section outlines the results of these statistical analyses.

Once again, to compare the four consecutive years of reading and math test scores at BES, simple analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests with multiple comparison Scheffe` tests were employed. The ANOVA tests allowed for the comparison of multiple means from independent samples to determine if significant differences exist in the mean scores between the sample data sets. The Scheffe` tests allowed for the comparison of sample data sets of unequal size. In all of the ANOVA tests $p=.05$.

The results of the ANVOA tests for the BES 3rd and 4th grade reading and math score from 2008-2011 were mixed. The ANOVA results of the 3rd grade reading scores showed that with df= 3, and $p=.05$, the observed F=3.897 >Dist. F=2.60. Therefore, there was a difference observed between the mean scores within the four consecutive years of reading test scores (see Table 9). More importantly, in the post hoc Sheffe` multi comparison analysis, there was a significant difference indicated between the 2009 test scores and the 2011 test scores, suggesting that that the 3rd grade reading test scores

significantly improved over that three year period (See Table 10 and *Figure 10*). The

increased student achievement in 3rd grade reading, from 2008 to 2011, can be seen in

Figure 10 and *Figure 11*.

Table 9

Analysis of Variance for BES 3rd Grade Reading Scores, 2008-2011

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9379.923	3	3126.641	3.897	.009
Within Groups	293637.669	366	802.289		
Total	303017.592	369			

Table 10

Post Hoc Sheffe` Test for BES 3rd Grade Reading Scores, 2008-2011

(I) Year	(J) Year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
2008	2009	5.50991	4.20142	.633
	2010	-4.75626	4.15975	.728
	2011	-7.77803	4.24632	.342
2009	2008	-5.50991	4.20142	.633
	2010	-10.26617	4.08921	.100
	2011	-13.28794(*)	4.17724	.019
2010	2008	4.75626	4.15975	.728
	2009	10.26617	4.08921	.100
	2011	-3.02177	4.13533	.911
2011	2008	7.77803	4.24632	.342
	2009	13.28794(*)	4.17724	.019
	2010	3.02177	4.13533	.911

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Figure 10. BES 3rd Grade Mean Reading Scores, 2008-2011
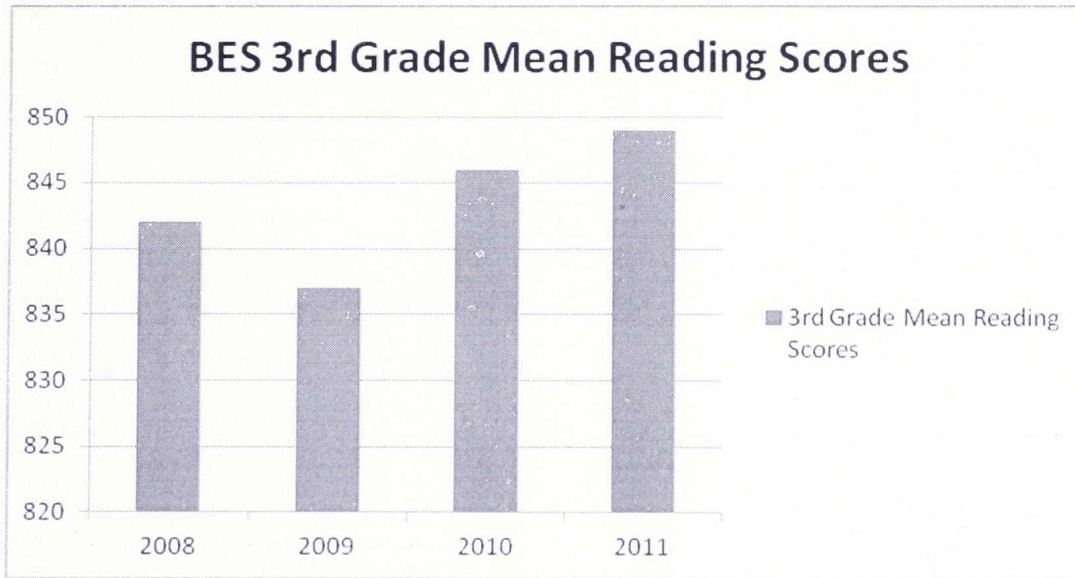
Figure 11. Bishop Elementary 3rd Grade Reading Scores, 2008-2011.
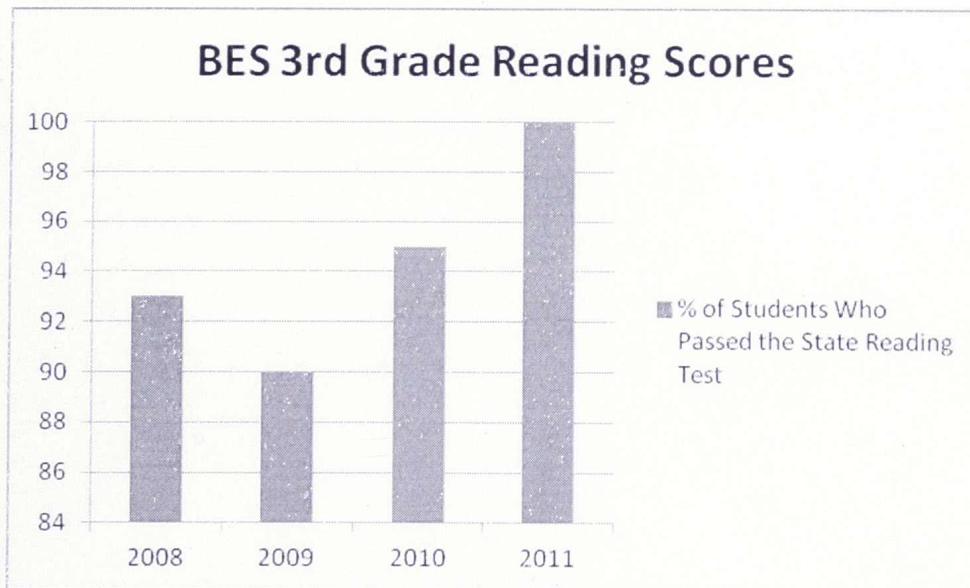
The ANOVA results of the 3rd grade math scores from 2008-2011 showed that

with df=3, and p=.05, the observed F=2.033 < Dist. F=2.60. Therefore, there was not a

significant difference between the mean scores within the four consecutive years of 3rd

grade math test scores (See Table 11). The post hoc Sheffe` multi comparison analysis

further supported the finding that there was not a significant difference anywhere

between the 3rd grade math test scores from 2008-2011 (See Table 12). The mean math

scores for BES show that scores were up slightly in 2011 from 2008 after peaking in

2009 (See *Figure 12)*. A slight decrease in the percentage of BES 3rd grade students who

passed the state math test from 2008-2011 is shown in *Figure 13*. As outlined in *Figure*

13, BES 3rd grade math scores decreased slightly from 2008-2009, but have remained

relatively constant from 2009-2011.

Table 11

Analysis of Variance for BES 3rd Grade Math Scores, 2008-2011

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8277.410	3	2759.137	2.033	.109
Within Groups	498188.757	367	1357.463		
Total	506466.167	370			

Table 12

Post Hoc Sheffe` Test for BES 3rd Grade Math Scores, 2008-2011

(I) Year	(J) Year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
2008	2009	-12.67376	5.43360	.144
	2010	-2.74150	5.37909	.967
	2011	-5.05243	5.50775	.839
2009	2008	12.67376	5.43360	.144
	2010	9.93226	5.31909	.324
	2011	7.62132	5.44917	.582
2010	2008	2.74150	5.37909	.967
	2009	-9.93226	5.31909	.324
	2011	-2.31094	5.39482	.980
2011	2008	5.05243	5.50775	.839
	2009	-7.62132	5.44917	.582
	2010	2.31094	5.39482	.980

Figure 12. BES 3rd Grade Mean Math Scores, 2008-2011

BES 3rd Grade Mean Math Scores

Figure 13. BES 3rd Grade Math Scores, 2008-2011.

BES 3rd Grade Math Scores

The ANOVA results of the BES 4th grade reading scores from 2008-2011 showed

that with df=3, and p=.05, the observed F=3.424> Dist. F=2.60. Therefore, there was a

significant difference between the mean scores within the four consecutive years of math

test scores (See Table 13). The post hoc Sheffe` multi comparison analysis indicated that

the greatest difference was between the mean scores in 2008 and 2011(See Table 14).

There was an increase from 2008-2011 in the 4th grade mean math scores (See *Figure*

14). Though the percentage of students passing the test remained relatively constant from

2008-2011 (See *Figure 15*), the Sheffe` multi comparison analysis shows that the overall

mean test scores increased from 2008-2011. This increase in mean scores over the 4 year

period suggests an increase in student achievement.

Table 13

Analysis of Variance for BES 4rd Grade Reading Scores, 2008-2011

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8160.254	3	2720.085	3.424	.017
Within Groups	294740.023	371	794.448		
Total	302900.277	374			

Table 14

Post Hoc Sheffe` Test for BES 4th Grade Reading Scores, 2008-2011

(I) Year	(J) Year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
2008	2009	-.27855	4.19323	1.000
	2010	-7.67691	4.12279	.327
	2011	-10.84501	4.20405	.086
2009	2008	.27855	4.19323	1.000
	2010	-7.39836	4.03948	.342
	2011	-10.56646	4.12238	.089
2010	2008	7.67691	4.12279	.327
	2009	7.39836	4.03948	.342
	2011	-3.16810	4.05071	.894
2011	2008	10.84501	4.20405	.086
	2009	10.56646	4.12238	.089
	2010	3.16810	4.05071	.894

Figure 14. BES 4th Grade Mean Reading Scores

BES 4th Grade Mean Reading Scores
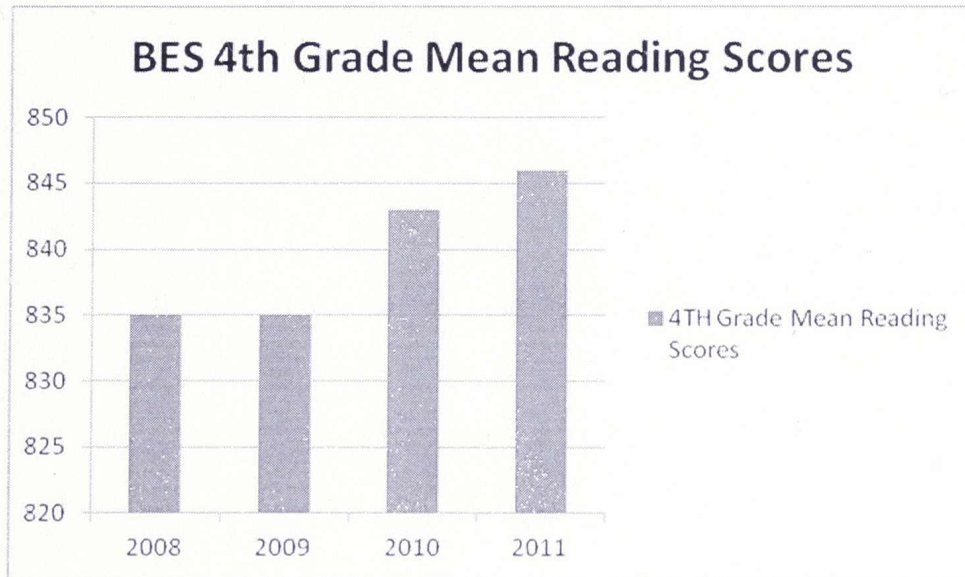
Figure 15. BES 4th Grade Reading Scores, 2008-2011.

BES 4th Grade Reading Scores
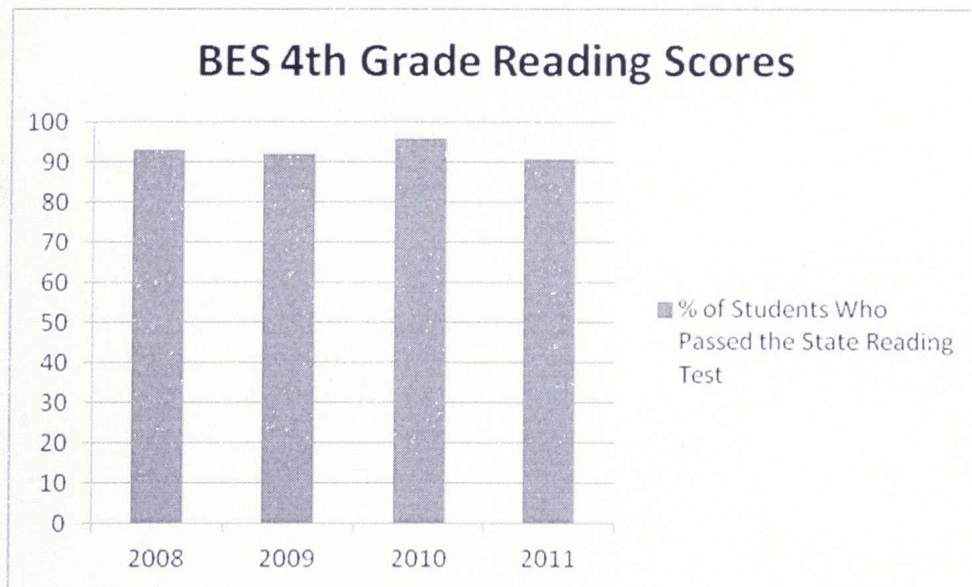
The ANOVA results of the BES 4th grade math scores from 2008-2011 showed

that with df=3, and p=.05, the observed F=2.76> Dist. F=2.60. Therefore, there was a

significant difference between the mean scores within the four consecutive years of math

test scores (See Table 15). The post hoc Sheffe` multi comparison analysis indicated that

the year with the highest mean scores on the 4th grade math test was 2010 (see Table 16).

Though the percentages of students who passed the 4th grade math test remained

relatively constant from 2008-2011 (See *Figure 17*), one can see from *Figure 16*, that the

mean score on the 4th grade math test increased from 2008 -2010, but decreased again in

2011.

Table 15

Analysis of Variance for BES 4th Grade Math Scores, 2008-2011

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12253.105	3	4084.368	2.761	.042
Within Groups	542991.300	367	1479.540		
Total	555244.404	370			

Table 16

Post Hoc Sheffe` Test for BES 4th Grade Math Scores, 2008-2011

(I) Year	(J) Year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
2008	2009	-1.62700	5.83144	.994
	2010	-13.36768	5.73715	.145
	2011	.05900	5.81722	1.000
2009	2008	1.62700	5.83144	.994
	2010	-11.74068	5.51260	.211
	2011	1.68600	5.59588	.993
2010	2008	13.36768	5.73715	.145
	2009	11.74068	5.51260	.211
	2011	13.42668	5.49755	.115
2011	2008	-.05900	5.81722	1.000
	2009	-1.68600	5.59588	.993
	2010	-13.42668	5.49755	.115

Figure 16. BES 4th Grade Mean Math Scores

BES 4th Grade Mean Math Scores
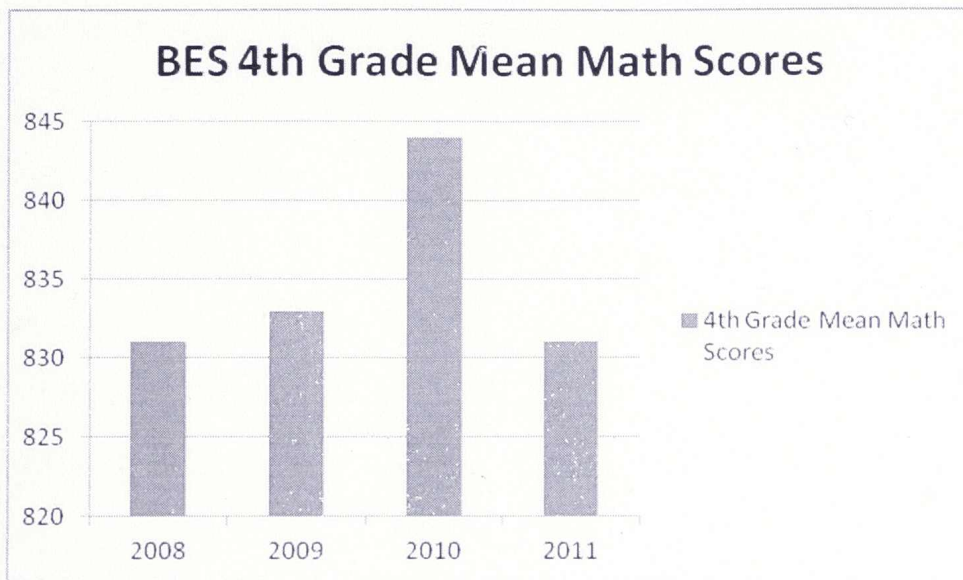
Figure 17. Bishop Elementary 4th Grade Math Scores, 2008-2011.

BES 4th Grade Math Scores
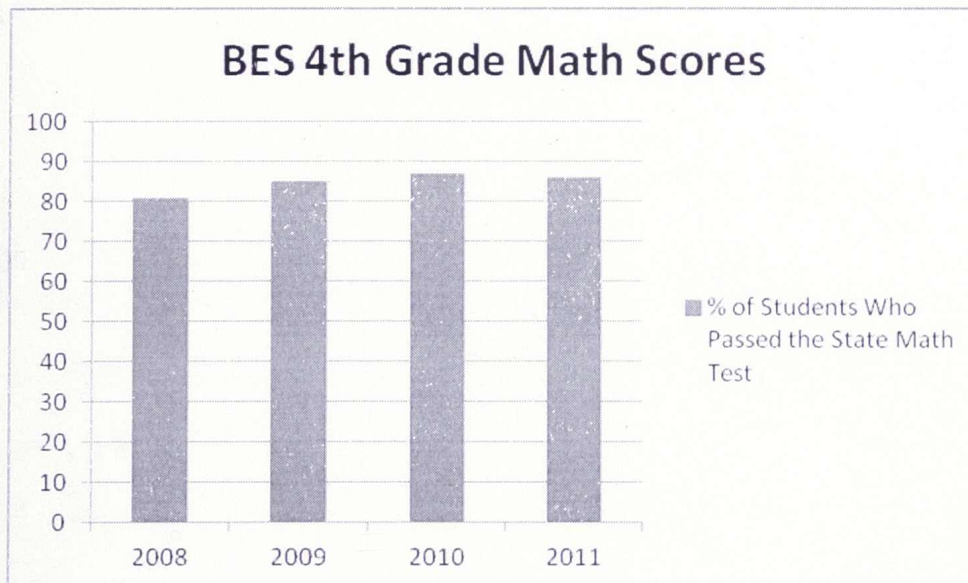
Conclusion

In this chapter evidence has shown how distributed leadership practices at GMS

and BES emerged from and were shaped by aspects of the situation such as the

organizational tools, routines, and structures that take place on a daily basis in each

school. For example, at GMS and BES, organizational routines and tools such as

collaborative planning, tables of specificity, weekly lesson planning routines, and use of student achievement data, all served to influence and shape the interactions between leaders and followers. As a result, leadership practices as well as instructional practices have evolved through these interactions among constituents.

Evidence has shown that during the years that distributed leadership has been implemented at GMs and BES, the practices, perceptions, and agency of teachers and administrators have changed. As discussed, teachers initially were concerned about additional workloads. They were also concerned about the blurring of the familiar boundaries between teacher and leader, and the new roles and responsibilities that the new organizational situations would require. Nonetheless, teacher perceptions and attitudes toward the distributed leadership practices implemented at GMS and BES have become mostly positive. As discussed, teachers have reported that they feel empowered and that student achievement has been enhanced. Evidence shows that collaboration among staff members at each school is more common than ever before. In essence, teachers and administrators have accepted the new organizational tools, routines and practices that have emerged from distributed leadership frameworks, and they in fact are doing what they say they are doing.

Evidence has also shown that distributed leadership practices at GMS and BES have supported student achievement. Though as an independent variable, the relationship between distributed leadership and student achievement must not be overstated, given that there are many variables in schools that affect student achievement. Even though the evidence has shown that for the most part student achievement has increased at GMS and BES, the increase in student achievement cannot be attributed directly or solely to

distributed leadership practices. Nevertheless, in examining the results of this study in their totality, it does appear that distributed leadership practices do contribute to the enhancement of the operations, practices, staff interactions, and student achievement in schools.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

The research conducted and outlined in this dissertation was conducted to better

understand the construct of distributed leadership and how it shapes the leadership

practices of administrators and teachers in schools. Another important factor of the

research in this dissertation was to determine if distributed leadership practices have a

positive effect on student achievement. To accomplish the purposes of this study, I

analyzed and examined the distributed leadership practices at Grantham Middle School

and Bishop Elementary School over the period of one to four school years using a

distributed leadership perspective to frame my study. In this chapter I will provide an

analysis of the implications of my findings in Chapter 4 in relation to some of the

problems and organizational theoretical perspectives outlined in Chapter 1. The objective

being that through discussions, conversations, and the exploration of new possibilities

about leadership practices in schools, new ideas and conversations about leadership

practice will emerge, contributing to authentic and sustained school improvement.

As stated in Chapter 1, the intent of this study was never to provide a recipe for success

that would constrict school leaders within one leadership model, but rather the intent has

been to contribute to an array of practical and flexible leadership frameworks that give

embattled educational leaders more options and opportunities in rapidly changing and

evolving situational contexts.

Implications of this Study

The findings of this dissertation, as outlined in detail in Chapter 4, present several

implications for the understanding and improvement of distributed leadership practices in

schools. The findings show that the notion and idea of distributed leadership in schools is

of primary importance to teachers and school administrators. Primarily, school leaders need to realize that as organizational demands placed on schools increase, such as those imposed by high stakes accountability initiatives and No Child Left Behind; new situational contexts will certainly require constant development of new tools and routines to meet these ever-changing demands. The notion of change as an inevitability is constant in any organization, but this notion is not always congruent with the human aspects of an organization, in which most members seek to conserve the established routines, tools, and structures. One important challenge for school leaders, within distributed leadership structures and frameworks will be to find the balance between the improvement needs of schools and the needs of the members within the schools, most notably the needs of teachers. Successfully navigating and negotiating this dilemma involves striking an effective balance between implementing necessary organizational routines, tools, and structures without losing the commitment or diminishing the morale or agency of the organization members. Striking this balance is critical to developing and implementing effective classroom instruction that results in high and authentic student achievement and school improvement.

Also, school leaders and teachers will need to explore their perceptions and preconceived notions about distributed leadership specifically, and school leadership in general. Distributed leadership frameworks require organization members to re-examine what it means to be a leader or a follower. School leaders and teachers must go beyond the notion of distributed leadership as simply the delegation of work or the initiation of actions to accomplish certain goals. They must begin to see the interconnected nature and the oftentimes non-linear attributes of leadership roles, actions, priorities and structures

as dictated by the situation. This idea that leadership roles and actions can be and often are non linear based on the situation, directly challenges our ingrained ideas about top down school leadership and the single heroic school leader - the principal.

Of extreme importance is an examination of student achievement in relation to distributed leadership. If distributed leadership frameworks and practices do not result in increased student achievement, we must then question the purpose and reasoning behind employing distributed leadership. This in itself is an overly simplistic statement. In education, we must begin to accept the idea that learning and student achievement is much more than just a score on a standardized test. If learning is demonstrated simply by a score on a standardized test, simply teaching students only the content on the test, as well as teaching them better test taking strategies would most likely be enough to increase student achievement. If this is the simple way in which student achievement is defined, we should simply teach to the test. I argue however, that we are not simply teaching a test - we are teaching children and preparing them to function as successful members of a complex global society! Students, therefore must be able to think, reason, and create to expand the possibilities for our lives. This obvious fact then challenges our intentions and objectives within schools and requires us to provide a broader and richer definition of student achievement and learning experiences in schools, to include ideas about critical thinking, higher order thinking and performance, and student achievement growth models. Naturally, a broader definition of student achievement would bring forth new situational contexts in schools, requiring new and innovative tools, routines and structures to meet student achievement goals. This is the fertile ground in which distributed leadership practices grow, thrive, and produce.

Not surprisingly, the realization of increased demands on schools to increase student achievement and the successful reconceptualization of leadership roles and responsibilities in schools will require additional resources and professional development. As school leaders and teachers cultivate new relationships in a rapidly changing educational landscape, professional learning will be a critical basis in supporting new leadership structures. New and innovative professional learning opportunities will help school leaders and teachers dispel many of the old school leadership paradigms. New and innovative professional development opportunities, that are creatively structured, will help influence the collaboration among various constituencies in schools. Increased professional learning and collaboration among organization members, focused on well communicated goals and objectives, influences changes in the choices and actions of organization members; these changes in personal actions create new situations that influence new tools and routines to address need actions to accomplish goals and objectives. Ultimately this process changes the way the organization works.

Study Findings and Organizational Theoretical Perspectives

As outlined in Chapter 1, there are several theoretical perspectives that have contributed to the emergence of distributed leadership. The four theoretical perspectives that were outlined were organizational learning theory, distributed cognition, complexity science, and high involvement leadership research. In this section of this study I will again provide a brief description of each theoretical perspective, as well as outline how these four theoretical perspectives support the findings of this distributed leadership study as outlined in Chapter 4.

Central to organizational learning theory, is the notion that organizations can learn outside of the knowledge and actions of individuals within the organization. In a sense, the collective intelligence of the organization becomes greater than that of any one of its many members. According to Senge (1990), organizations that experience change must become flexible, adaptive, and more efficient to survive. Senge claims that organizations can actually develop a capacity to learn. Organizations that continuously develop learning capacity essentially create their own futures. For this to be accomplished requires a collective paradigm shift on the part of the organizations' members. When organizational learning theory is applied in relation to distributed leadership, it is assumed that distributed leadership will lead to increased organizational capacity, through implied interactions and coordinated planning of organizational members (Leithwood, Macall, and Strauss, 2009).

The evidence of findings in Chapter 4 show that distributed leadership practices introduced at both GMS and BES led to increased organizational capacity by defining and influencing interactions among staff members at both schools. These new and more frequent interactions among staff members at GMS and BES, resulted in the sharing of and development of new knowledge about and within the organizations. The organizational knowledge that was generated at GMS and BES as a result of activities such as common planning sessions, school data meetings, and various professional learning communities increased the capacity of both organizations to effectively respond to new and evolving situational contexts.

Whereas organizational learning theory focuses on the building of organizational capacity through combined actions and knowledge of individuals within an organization,

distributed cognition focuses on organizational capacity as influenced by the coordination

of individuals in an organization, artifacts, and the environment. Distributed cognition

theories suggest that organizations build capacity not so much through organizational

learning, but rather by learning how to bring available and underutilized resources

(technology and artifacts) to bear in new situations. When applied to distributed

leadership at GMS and BES, distributed cognition frameworks help us better understand

how leaders and followers in both schools function within situations, according to

available resources and material conditions. For example, both GMS and BES brought

technology to bear in situations where better data was needed to evaluate and discuss

student achievement. The RISO Data Tools system, though in different scopes and

capacities, has been employed at both schools to provide school leaders and teachers with

better data with which to make instructional decisions.

Complexity science has been a useful theory for understanding the distributed

leadership construct. Simply stated, complexity science is the study of complex systems.

Complex systems are systems that that have many parts that interact to produce complex

systemic behaviors that are not easily explained in relation to the behaviors of the

individual constituents of an organization. Schools are certainly fine examples of

complex systems.

Complexity science allows us to examine the ability of organizations and systems

to adapt as they move between periods of stability and instability. In essence, complexity

theory suggests that organizations, during periods of rapid change or instability will

attempt to restore order through interdependent relationships between organizational

participants. Within these interdependent interactions information is exchanged, actions

are undertaken, and feedback is acted upon. These activities are not centralized but are

formed and reformed interdependently among organization members in any given

situation.

One can see how complexity science theories serve to support the findings of this

study in Chapter 4. At both GMS and BES, situational contexts required and influenced

staff member to work interdependently in many different capacities to address various

problems that arose at the schools or to achieve established goals and objectives.

Naturally, any change to the established norms of an organization initially creates an

imbalance in the organization. The situations created by these initial imbalances

motivated the staff members at each school to develop new structures, tools, and routines

to attempt to re-establish homeostasis in the organization. Examples of change at GMS

and BES that served as catalysts for this process were changes in curriculums and yearly

increases in AMOs under NCLB. Events such as these influenced staff members to

attempt to restore order through collaborative relationships. Not only did GMS and BES

staff collaborate to meet ever changing challenges, but situations would often influence

changes in the leader and follower roles. For example, in certain situations various

teachers and staff members may serve as leaders, while as a new situational context is

presented, the same teachers and staff members may be required to serve as the followers.

The line of theory that is most closely aligned with distributed leadership is the

theoretical perspectives associated with high involvement leadership, or participative

leadership. Participative leadership is a leadership style in which a formal leader

functions as a facilitator, allowing group members to participate in organizational goal

setting and the implementation of strategies to accomplish set goals. Benefits of this type

of leadership include expansion of possibilities for the organizations, as well as

developing leaders within the organization that will be of benefit to the organization at

later dates. Through participative leadership, central leaders are able to release

organizational challenges to be addressed by creative and well equipped group members.

The idea is that when people are seen as valuable to an organization, and when they are

equipped to meet organizational challenges, there is a synergistic effect that takes place,

as the creative and problem solving possibilities of motivated and well equipped group

members is greater than that of a lone and centralized formal leader.

The findings of this study outlined in Chapter 4 are best supported by this

theoretical perspective. Though distributed leadership theories fly in the face of the

heroic leader who is responsible for any and all changes and school improvement

initiatives in schools, it is clear in Chapter 4 that both Mrs. Harris and Mr. Michaels

served as important change agents and facilitators of change in their schools. Both

principals though, did not function alone to bring about change. They went to

considerable lengths to solicit input from all stakeholders. It is apparent that through the

changes that took place at both schools, both principals expended considerable effort to

build and develop leaders and leadership teams at GMS and BES.

New Images of Distributed Leadership

In Chapter 1 I stated that, at the end of this study it was my intent to draw upon

organizational theory to analyze and discuss new images of distributed leadership and the

potential that this construct may or may not hold in bringing about real school

improvement. To some degree I have been successful in this aim. For example, evidence

as outlined and discussed in Chapter 4 revealed that there was an increase in student

achievement, though to different degrees, at both GMS and BES as distributed leadership practices were and continued to be implemented. Though many variables in schools impact student achievement, and distributed leadership practices at GMS and BES cannot be proven to have been the main variable in increasing or sustaining student achievement at both schools, I argue that distributed leadership practices have helped create school environments and cultures that are conducive to open communication and collaboration among school leaders, staff members, and teachers that do positively impact student achievement and school improvement. One need only to review the findings in Chapter 4 from the Leadership Impact surveys at each school, and it is clear to see that teachers see the benefits in distributed leadership with regard to enhanced job satisfaction and their belief that distributed leadership does enhance teaching and learning.

As for new images of distributed leadership and how distributed leadership practices will look and function in schools in the future - that is difficult to say. The difficulty in proposing an image of distributed leadership lies in the fact that distributed leadership practices are situationally determined. The countless situational contexts that arise and are experienced in any given school require the development of unique tools and routines, by a countless array of flexible and collaborative groups of school leaders and teachers. Nevertheless, in my opinion, flexible and collaborative groups of school stakeholders, committed to working in challenging situations with the common and guided purpose to improve teaching and learning, and most importantly student achievement, is the most beautiful image of distributed leadership that I can imagine.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Grantham Middle School Leadership Impact Survey

Note: All school names and names of people have been changed to protect anonymity and confidentiality, as well as to coincide with names used throughout the study.

Question 1 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Teachers are often recognized as formal leaders at my school; not just school administrators.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		4	17.39%
Agree		16	69.57%
Neutral		2	8.70%
Disagree		1	4.35%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 2 (Free response)
21 of 23 respondents answered this question.

List some of the positions, at your school, in which teachers serve, that are considered as formal leadership positions. (i.e., team leader, subject area leader, etc.).

	Number of Respondents	Percent
BEST team, Team Leader, Subject Area Leader, Coaches	1	4.76%
subject area and team leaders coaches club sponsor	1	4.76%
Subject area leader, mentor teacher, team leader	1	4.76%
team leader dept. chair RTI	1	4.76%
team leader subject area leader	1	4.76%
team leader subject area leader BEST team RTI team Sunshine club	1	4.76%
Team Leader Subject Area Leader Leadership Team (BeST)	1	4.76%
team leader subject area leader school counsel representative leadership/improvement team made up of teachers and administrators	1	4.76%
Team leader Subject leader Reading coach	1	4.76%
team leader, BEST team-school leadership team, dept. chair, TSS-mentor	1	4.76%
Team Leader, Subject Area Leader, BEST (School Improvement) Team Members	1	4.76%
team leader, subject area leader, BEST team	1	4.76%
Team Leader, subject area leader, BEST team. It seems that people chosen for these positions are often "yes" people who are willing to do the administrators' work for the recognition.	1	4.76%
Team leader, subject area leader, committee chair, school leadership team	1	4.76%
team leader, subject leader, best team, light team, flower fund team	1	4.76%
team leaders	1	4.76%
team leaders school council	1	4.76%
Team Leaders Subject Area Leaders GPS Redelivery Learning Focus Strategy Redelivery Testing Strategy redelivery	1	4.76%

		Number	Percent
Team Leaders Subject Leaders BEST Team		1	4.76%
team leaders, leadership team participants, school council members		1	4.76%
team leaders, subject leaders, School improvement teams, other committees that decide key elements of curriculum and leadership.		1	4.76%
Total		21	100.00%

Question 3 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Teachers, at my school, are encouraged to take on leadership roles in developing and implementing school improvement initiatives.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		5	21.74%
Agree		14	60.87%
Neutral		4	17.39%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 4 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

It is unrealistic to expect a school principal to initiate and lead every school improvement or leadership activity in a school.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		11	47.83%
Agree		9	39.13%
Neutral		2	8.70%
Disagree		1	4.35%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 5 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, listen to the ideas and suggestions of staff members with regard to school improvement.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		4	17.39%
Agree		17	73.91%
Neutral		1	4.35%
Disagree		1	4.35%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 6 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Distribution of leadership roles and activities are encouraged at my school.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		3	13.04%
Agree		14	60.87%
Neutral		4	17.39%
Disagree		2	8.70%

Strongly Disagree   0   0.00%

Question 7 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Distribution of leadership roles and activities enhance instruction and student achievement.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		9	39.13%
Agree		8	34.78%
Neutral		6	26.09%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 8 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Distribution of leadership roles and activities in schools enhances teacher job satisfaction.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		7	30.43%
Agree		12	52.17%
Neutral		3	13.04%
Disagree		1	4.35%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 9 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

When I take on a leadership role at my school I feel empowered.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		4	17.39%
Agree		13	56.52%
Neutral		6	26.09%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 10 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

I feel that leadership responsibilities in schools can be a burden on teachers.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		1	4.35%
Agree		9	39.13%
Neutral		4	17.39%
Disagree		5	21.74%
Strongly Disagree		4	17.39%

Question 11 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, promote and sustain the school's collaboratively developed vision and mission through a variety of means (i.e., ongoing staff conversations, leadership team and faculty meetings, student achievement data reviews, collaborative instructional planning, and collaboratively planned school improvement plans and initiatives.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		8	34.78%
Frequently		9	39.13%
Sometimes		6	26.09%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 12 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, solicit input from staff and stakeholders when setting school goals and planning school improvement initiatives.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		8	34.78%
Frequently		11	47.83%
Sometimes		4	17.39%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 13 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, set and maintain high expectations for staff and students alike. This is visible through the leader's actions and interactions with instructional staff.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		10	43.48%
Frequently		7	30.43%
Sometimes		6	26.09%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 14 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, monitor instructional progress (i.e., regularly engages in focused classroom learning walkthroughs, student work evaluations, remediation and intervention meetings, analysis of formative and summative data sources with staff).

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		13	56.52%
Frequently		5	21.74%
Sometimes		5	21.74%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 15 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, strive to support the development of teacher's content knowledge (i.e., recognized as instructional leader in the school, consistently sought out for content knowledge , offers professional development with extensive classroom practice and support).

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		5	21.74%
Frequently		10	43.48%
Sometimes		7	30.43%
Rarely		1	4.35%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 16 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, strive to support the development of teacher's pedagogical skills (i.e., recognized as instructional leaders in the school, consistently sought out for instructional teaching strategies knowledge, offers professional development with extensive classroom practice and support).

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		4	17.39%
Frequently		10	43.48%
Sometimes		8	34.78%
Rarely		1	4.35%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 17 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, provide encouragement, recognition, and support for teachers and staff members.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		8	34.78%
Frequently		8	34.78%
Sometimes		7	30.43%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 18 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

I seek out opportunities to lead activities at my school.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		3	13.04%
Frequently		5	21.74%
Sometimes		8	34.78%
Rarely		6	26.09%
Never		1	4.35%

Question 19 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, adapt and modify school procedures, policies, and tools as needed to improve instruction with collaborative input from staff.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually	4	17.39%
Frequently	9	39.13%
Sometimes	7	30.43%
Rarely	3	13.04%
Never	0	0.00%

Question 20 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, support and maintain high expectations of collaboration among teachers.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually	14	60.87%
Frequently	8	34.78%
Sometimes	1	4.35%
Rarely	0	0.00%
Never	0	0.00%

Question 21 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, solicit staff input when planning for and acquiring resources.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually	9	39.13%
Frequently	8	34.78%
Sometimes	5	21.74%
Rarely	1	4.35%
Never	0	0.00%

Question 22 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, procure resources for teachers.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually	7	30.43%
Frequently	9	39.13%
Sometimes	7	30.43%
Rarely	0	0.00%
Never	0	0.00%

Question 23 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, equitably distribute resources to teachers.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		9	39.13%
Frequently		8	34.78%
Sometimes		5	21.74%
Rarely		1	4.35%
Never		0	0.00%

top

Question 24 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, handle and attempt to reduce disturbances that interrupt teaching practices.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		6	26.09%
Frequently		9	39.13%
Sometimes		7	30.43%
Rarely		1	4.35%
Never		0	0.00%

top

Question 25 (Multiple select)
23 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, create and maintain an orderly work environment.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		14	60.87%
Frequently		7	30.43%
Sometimes		2	8.70%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

top

Question 26 (Free response)
13 of 23 respondents answered this question.

Please list examples of activities, committees, teams, or initiatives that are evidence of distributed or shared leadership at your school.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
8th grade GA studies mock assembly Academic Teams GRASP committee	1	7.69%
Best team Team leader Content leaders	1	7.69%
BEST Team, Team Leaders, Subject Area Leaders, and committees put together for all activities that occur during the year (8th grade dance, Relay for Life, etc)	1	7.69%
In addition to #1, Relay for Life, Media Center-AR, RTI,	1	7.69%
Leadership (BeST Team)	1	7.69%

Leadership Team (BeST) Team Meetings Relay for Life Events Career Day Activities CRCT Boot Camp Sunshine(Family)Fund	1	7.69%
leadership team, local school council, team chairs, school improvement team	1	7.69%
Relay for Life Reteach Boot Camp BEST Pep Rallies	1	7.69%
School improvement team Team leaders BEST Team	1	7.69%
See above	1	7.69%
Selection of textbooks is made by teacher representatives. Leadership team/school improvement team. School/system accreditation team Team leaders meetings	1	7.69%
subject areas in each grade work together for assessment writing, project writing, and planning. School improvement team and other such teams work together to make the faculty, staff, and students have the best working and learning environment.	1	7.69%
team leaders leadership team school council	1	7.69%
Total	13	100.00%

Appendix B

Bishop Elementary School Leadership Impact Survey

Note: All school names and names of people have been changed to protect anonymity and confidentiality, as well as to coincide with names used throughout the study.

Question Summary

	Question	Question Type	% of Respondents Submitting
Details	Question 1	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 2	Free response	93.33%
Details	Question 3	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 4	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 5	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 6	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 7	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 8	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 9	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 10	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 11	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 12	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 13	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 14	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 15	Multiple select	93.33%
Details	Question 16	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 17	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 18	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 19	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 20	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 21	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 22	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 23	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 24	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 25	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 26	Free response	73.33%

Question 1 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Teachers are often recognized as formal leaders at my school; not just school administrators.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		5	33.33%
Agree		7	46.67%
Neutral		2	13.33%
Disagree		1	6.67%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 2 (Free response)
14 of 15 respondents answered this question.

List some of the positions, at your school, in which teachers serve, that are considered as formal leadership positions. (i.e., team leader, subject area leader, etc.).

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Grade Level Chair Leadership Team RTI Chair Promotion/Retention Committee	1	7.14%
grade level chair RTI chair leadership team technology team leaders	1	7.14%
GRADE LEVEL CHAIR SST CHAIR LEADERSHIP TEAM	1	7.14%
Grade Level Chair Person Leadership Team SST/RTI Representatives Technology Representative School Improvement Team	1	7.14%
Grade level chair, member of Leadership team, SST/RTI/Promotion-Retention committee members or leaders	1	7.14%
grade level chairs RTI leaders technology teams leadership teams	1	7.14%
Grade level chairs; chair of various committees;	1	7.14%
Grade Level Leader, SST, other committees	1	7.14%
Leadership team RTI Technology Rep. Benchmark/CRCT	1	7.14%
Leadership team RTI chairperson(s) LITE team Benchmark/CRCT test item coordinator	1	7.14%
Leadership Team members School Council Media Committee Benchmark writing committee Calendar Committee	1	7.14%
Team Leader RTI Technology Chair School Improvement	1	7.14%
team leader RTI Chairpersons Leadership team	1	7.14%
Team leader, school leadership team, county committees, state committees,	1	7.14%
Total	14	100.00%

top

Question 3 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Teachers, at my school, are encouraged to take on leadership roles in developing and implementing school improvement initiatives.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree	4	26.67%
Agree	9	60.00%
Neutral	2	13.33%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%

top

Question 4 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

It is unrealistic to expect a school principal to initiate and lead every school improvement or leadership activity in a school.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree	9	60.00%
Agree	4	26.67%
Neutral	2	13.33%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%

Question 5 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, listen to the ideas and suggestions of staff members with regard to school improvement.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		6	40.00%
Agree		8	53.33%
Neutral		0	0.00%
Disagree		1	6.67%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 6 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Distribution of leadership roles and activities are encouraged at my school.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		4	26.67%
Agree		9	60.00%
Neutral		1	6.67%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree		1	6.67%

Question 7 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Distribution of leadership roles and activities enhance instruction and student achievement.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		8	53.33%
Agree		7	46.67%
Neutral		0	0.00%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 8 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Distribution of leadership roles and activities in schools enhances teacher job satisfaction.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		9	60.00%
Agree		5	33.33%
Neutral		1	6.67%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 9 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

When I take on a leadership role at my school I feel empowered.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		2	13.33%
Agree		7	46.67%
Neutral		5	33.33%
Disagree		1	6.67%
Strongly Disagree		0	0.00%

Question 10 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

I feel that leadership responsibilities in schools can be a burden on teachers.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly Agree		1	6.67%
Agree		4	26.67%
Neutral		5	33.33%
Disagree		4	26.67%
Strongly Disagree		1	6.67%

Question 11 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, promote and sustain the school's collaboratively developed vision and mission through a variety of means (i.e., ongoing staff conversations, leadership team and faculty meetings, student achievement data reviews, collaborative instructional planning, and collaboratively planned school improvement plans and initiatives.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		8	53.33%
Frequently		6	40.00%
Sometimes		1	6.67%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 12 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, solicit input from staff and stakeholders when setting school goals and planning school improvement initiatives.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		7	46.67%
Frequently		7	46.67%
Sometimes		1	6.67%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 13 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, set and maintain high expectations for staff and students alike. This is visible through the leader's actions and interactions with instructional staff.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		10	66.67%
Frequently		4	26.67%
Sometimes		1	6.67%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 14 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, monitor instructional progress (i.e., regularly engages in focused classroom learning walkthroughs, student work evaluations, remediation and intervention meetings, analysis of formative and summative data sources with staff).

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		8	53.33%
Frequently		5	33.33%
Sometimes		1	6.67%
Rarely		1	6.67%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 15 (Multiple select)
14 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, strive to support the development of teacher's content knowledge (i.e., recognized as instructional leader in the school, consistently sought out for content knowledge , offers professional development with extensive classroom practice and support).

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		6	42.86%
Frequently		8	57.14%
Sometimes		0	0.00%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 16 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, strive to support the development of teacher's pedagogical skills (i.e., recognized as instructional leaders in the school, consistently sought out for instructional teaching strategies knowledge, offers professional development with extensive classroom practice and support).

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		6	40.00%
Frequently		9	60.00%
Sometimes		0	0.00%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 17 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, provide encouragement, recognition, and support for teachers and staff members.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		11	73.33%
Frequently		4	26.67%
Sometimes		0	0.00%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 18 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

I seek out opportunities to lead activities at my school.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		2	13.33%
Frequently		6	40.00%
Sometimes		5	33.33%
Rarely		1	6.67%
Never		1	6.67%

Question 19 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, adapt and modify school procedures, policies, and tools as needed to improve instruction with collaborative input from staff.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		8	53.33%
Frequently		6	40.00%
Sometimes		0	0.00%
Rarely		1	6.67%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 20 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Formal leaders, at my school, support and maintain high expectations of collaboration among teachers.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		11	73.33%
Frequently		4	26.67%
Sometimes		0	0.00%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 21 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, solicit staff input when planning for and acquiring resources.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		6	40.00%
Frequently		8	53.33%
Sometimes		1	6.67%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 22 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, procure resources for teachers.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		6	40.00%
Frequently		9	60.00%
Sometimes		0	0.00%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 23 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, equitably distribute resources to teachers.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		7	46.67%
Frequently		6	40.00%
Sometimes		2	13.33%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 24 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, handle and attempt to reduce disturbances that interrupt teaching practices.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		7	46.67%
Frequently		7	46.67%
Sometimes		1	6.67%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 25 (Multiple select)
15 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Leaders, at my school, create and maintain an orderly work environment.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Continually		11	73.33%
Frequently		4	26.67%
Sometimes		0	0.00%
Rarely		0	0.00%
Never		0	0.00%

Question 26 (Free response)
11 of 15 respondents answered this question.

Please list examples of activities, committees, teams, or initiatives that are evidence of distributed or shared leadership at your school.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Common Planning time is an opportunity to meet with teachers in a small group and give them a chance to have input in school decisions. School Leadership team meet on a regular basis to make sure the School Improvement Plan is affective and make changes as needed. School Council meets to incorporate stakeholders ideas and ways to better our school.	1	9.09%
COUGARS FOR CHRIST RELAY FOR LIFE GRADE LEVEL CHAIR SST CHAIR LEADERSHIP TEAM TECHNOLOGY TEAM LITE TEAM CHORUS	1	9.09%
Grade level chairs Leadership Team SACS team members	1	9.09%
Grade level meetings Collaborative planning Textbook evaluation Professional development training	1	9.09%
grade level meetings collaborative planning textbook evaluations professional development training	1	9.09%
Leadership team technology team RTI	1	9.09%
Leadership Team for the school Common planning - within grade levels we have one grade level chair but share responsibilities within our specific grade level as necessary, Flexible grouping (we have done in the past and will do in the future under our current leader) allows members in each grade level and sometimes across grade levels to draw from their specific strengths to be leaders in a skill or content area RTI grade level teams should be an opportunity for teachers at each grade level to distribute or share leadership at their current grade level with the responsibilities that keep the checks and balances in place with Progress Monitoring and finding quality research based interventions to use regularly	1	9.09%
leadership team, school improvement team, grade level chair, common planning, RTI assistance, CRCT/GRASP planning and implementation	1	9.09%
Leadership team; grade level meetings; SST meetings; various fundraisers; SACS committees; school improvement team; school council	1	9.09%
RTI, Promotion/Retention, School Leadership Team, Grade Level Chairs... Things here at our school are changing, I am looking forward to a new school year and the opportunity for Mr. Michaels to begin the school year with us from the beginning. The changes he has implemented thus far are great. I hope that he will continue to promote leadership opportunities for all staff. In the past the grade level chairs never changed and the same people were asked to be on every committee. It would be nice for all teachers to experience those responsibilities and share the roles so that the same people are not "burnt out" and new people gain experience.	1	9.09%
Since I teach Pre-K, there are a lot of things that go on in our school that we are not privy to. I know that I have taught in this school 8 years and someone who has taught 7 years in this school has been Grade Level Leader every year. I do not think that is fair. We (the team) do not get updates on what is going on. I have never been asked to do this job and I would like the honor of being asked to serve since there are so many other committees, teams, etc. that we are never asked to participate in.	1	9.09%
Total	11	100.00%

Appendix C1

Grantham Middle School Table of Specificity Sample

UNIT:

Standards

Grantham Middle School Table of Specifications

Knowledge of (Recall Recognize)				Comprehension/ Translation (Identify Describe Interpret)	Application (Use Illustrate Solve)	Analysis & Synthesis (Compare Infer Contrast)
Terms	**Facts**	**Rules & Principles**	**Processes & Procedures**			
New and Essential Vocabulary:	**Specific Information:**	Relationships	Patterns	Identify	Use	Compare
Words	Persons	Guidelines	Sequences of Events	Describe	Illustrate	Contrast
Names	Events	Organizational Cues	Order of Operations	Recognize	Solve	Explain
Phrases	Dates		Steps in a Process	Distinguish	Demonstrate	Infer
Symbols	Data			Compute		Combine
	Operations					Construct
						Evaluate
						Integrate

Appendix C2

Grantham Middle School Table of Specificity 8th Grade ELA Sample

Grantham Middle School Table of Specifications

UNIT: 8th Grade Language Arts FEVER 1793 (1st Nine Weeks)

Standards	Knowledge of (Recall / Recognize)				Comprehension/ Translation (Identify, Describe, Interpret)	Application (Use, Illustrate, Solve)	Analysis & Synthesis (Compare, Infer, Contrast)
	Terms	Facts	Rules & Principles	Processes & Procedures			
ELA8R1. The student demonstrates comprehension and shows evidence of a warranted and responsible explanation of a variety of literary and informational texts. ELA8R2. The student under-stands and acquires new vocabulary and uses it correctly in reading and	**New and Essential Vocabulary:** Genre: (Prose, Poetry, Fiction, Non-fiction) Point of View Characterization Plot & Subplot	**Specific Information:** 1793 America Historical Context Yellow Fever Commotion Fatigue	Freytag Pyramid (Plot Diagram) Storyboard Accuracy Rate Expression	Reader's Notes Graphic Organizers Word Walls Writing Prompts Writing Rubrics	I can distinguish between different genres and explain characteristics of each. I can identify and describe the basic elements of plot and protagonist/antagonist in a novel or short story. I can describe author's point of view and	Using text and illustrations, I can demonstrate a thorough understanding of what I read. In a small or whole group setting, I can read with fluency and	Using reading strategies, context clues, and new vocabulary, I construct character maps and plot diagrams to represent what I am reading.

	Exposition	Stench	Role	Peer Editing	characterization	expression	
writing.	Exposition	Stench			characterization devices.	expression.	I utilize new vocabulary in my writing and speaking.
ELA8R3. The student reads aloud, accurately (in the range of 95%), familiar material in a variety of genres, in a way that makes meaning clear to listeners.	Rising Action	Wretched	Audience	Practice Writing	I can interpret author's purpose, tone, and mood.	Employing the steps of the writing process, I can compose narrative, expository, and persuasive writing.	I compose, edit, and proofread pieces of narrative, expository and persuasive writing to contribute to a group newspaper.
	Climax	Dilemma	Format	Test			
	Falling Action	Famished	Topic		I can give examples of foreshadowing and flashback.		
	Resolution	Placid					
ELA8RC2 The student participates in discussions related to curricular learning in all subject areas.	Tone	Scoundrel			I can recognize the different steps in the writing process in my own writing and that of others.		
	Mood	Fractious					
	Author's	Delectable					
	Purpose	Dawdle					
ELA8W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure.	Protagonist	Vehement					
	Antagonist	Backgammon					
	Foreshadowing	Engage Reader					
	Flashback	Develop Details					
	Prewriting						
	Rough Draft	Provide Closure					
	Revising/Editing						
	Final Draft						
	Proofreading						

Appendix D

Bishop Elementary School Teacher Needs Assessment Survey: December 2010

Note: All school names and names of people have been changed to protect anonymity and confidentiality, as well as to coincide with names used throughout the study.

Question Summary

	Question	Question Type	% of Respondents Submitting
Details	Question 1	Free response	90.48%
Details	Question 2	Free response	95.24%
Details	Question 3	Free response	90.48%
Details	Question 4	Free response	80.95%
Details	Question 5	Free response	71.43%
Details	Question 6	Free response	85.71%
Details	Question 7	Free response	71.43%

Question 1 (Free response)
19 of 21 respondents answered this question.

Describe what you believe to be the best aspects of Bishop. What are the positive things about the Bishop school culture?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
-Teachers that care about their students -Family atmosphere -Safety -Orderly behavior of students (I think it is good that they can't go wild in the lunchroom, and believe it or not I'm a parent of a child here too. :))	1	5.26%
1) Respect...for students, administration, parents, and each other. 2) Support...for students, administration, parents, and each other. 3) Sharing...of resources, talents, ideas, and time. 4) Perseverance...no child is left behind....we truly work together for the betterment of all children and do not mind going the extra mile to help one who needs more.	1	5.26%
Everyone cares about each other as a staff and faculty. We are truly concerned about needs and problems that concern each ones families. We truly care about the children. It doesn't matter ethnicity, economics or whatever, I feel each child is treated with respect.	1	5.26%
I appreciate the love that is shared among this family of teachers and staff. The learning environment is welcoming and conducive to high levels of student achievement. The blessings here far out-weigh the burdens.	1	5.26%
I believe that faculty and staff truly care about our children. We are a safe and clean school.	1	5.26%
I believe that we have a commitment to making sure the school is safe, has high academic levels, and treats each child with value. It is a clean school. Friendly staff.	1	5.26%
I have been at Bishop for 13 years since we opened. In the beginning we were a very close knit family. As the years have gone by, we have lost that family relationship. The faculty and staff have grown in numbers since we have come together 13 years ago. Along with that came new people and new ideas. The lack of communication somehow got lost and the family ties along with it. I would like for that to happen again. It used to be not only a place to help children learn, but also a place to have fun with your children. Celebrate holidays etc. I would like for this to be the best aspect of Bishop, a family relationship with the students and the faculty and staff.	1	5.26%
I think our staff is very caring towards each other and with all our children. Also, I believe the strongest emphasis has been on teaching the curriculum. There is not a lot of "fluff"! I even do my classroom guidance during a time that they would be in the media center, so I'm not taking away more time from the classroom teacher.	1	5.26%
It's clean; It's a happy place to be. People care about each other. Everyone is dedicated to doing their best for children each day.	1	5.26%
Bishop has a structured academic environment, and the teachers are passionate to the needs of the students. Parents are very supportive and responsive.	1	5.26%
Bishop is a caring community of educators, parents, and students. We are committed to excellence in education and strive to help each student be the best that he or she can be. As a grade level (fourth grade) we share everything and collaborate on planning and instructional materials. The sum is greater than the individual parts. As an individual educator, I celebrate diversity and appreciate the different cultures and perspectives that each of my students brings to our classroom.	1	5.26%

Bishop is a very welcoming school to all kinds of people. We try to help anyone that may need it. Everyone is here for the kids and wants the best for them. Safety is the best here at Bishop . Parents know that when their kids are dropped off they are in the best of hands.	1	5.26%
Our faculty and the support of one another. How we pull together to accomplish goals set. Our students are loving and each have their own talents..	1	5.26%
Our reputation! Teachers, parapros, and staff as a whole. We work as school family!	1	5.26%
Safety, the staff, the overall look of the school - everything is clean, teachers care about the students...not just the teachers though - the entire staff genuinely cares about the kids and each other.	1	5.26%
The best things about Bishop is that we strive for nothing but the best. I also feel blessed to be a school where all the employees get along like a family. We all look out for each other.	1	5.26%
The discipline and desire of the children to learn.	1	5.26%
We care about each other! We care about keeping our school safe and clean! We are so proud of this school and think it's the best!	1	5.26%
We really love and care about the students we teach, and we want to see them succeed. We also have a warm, welcoming environment, not only to students, but to parents and other visitors as well. We do have the potential to be the best school around.	1	5.26%
Total	19	100.00%

Question 2 (Free response)
20 of 21 respondents answered this question.

What are the areas in which you feel Bishop has opportunities to improve? What would you like to see change?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
I would like to see the kids having fun with activities like book character parades, backward days, crazy socks day ect. I also think we should reward a child that is really trying to do good in their school work and behavior! I also think that the 4th grade should be given more responsibility like morning or afternoon announcements and help keeping the noise level down in the halls! I also think that the children that buy ice cream in the lunch room should had already given the money to the teacher to turn in to the office (so they wouldn't have to handle money at lunch time) and then given a paper stub that they can give to the parapro instead of money. The stubs would be torn and thrown away! Also, at that age I think that there should be a sign out and sign in sheet, on a stand, that they could sign if they need to go to the bathroom! The stage could Maybe be used for a class that won for the best behavior! We could put a table up there for the class to eat! Parents love things like this too! Also, I know we can't have field trips because of the budget but I'm sure if a parent was ask to pay for their child to go on a field trip, they would! Also, we could have a spirit day on Fridays or some Fridays where we could wear a School t-shirt and jeans or comfortable pants and get off at 3pm if all work has been done for a good week!	1	5.00%
*I am with you on the belief that security it the most important part of a school. With that being said, I would like to see Bishop have a cut off for checking out students like the other schools in Grantham County have. I think there is too much traffic in the halls after school with parents walking down to the classrooms to get their children. I think it is too difficult on the office staff to handle transportation issues and sign outs at the same time (2pm). With new staff members in the office it will be important for us to be checking parent's IDs. I think that it is too much to take on while dismissing students. I believe that putting a cut off at 1:45 would seem to help. *I would also like to see the lunchroom procedures change. While I believe it takes order to run a school, I think that making children walk with their feet on "each side of the line" is taking it too far. I think children should be allowed to talk quietly after the first 10 minutes of lunch. Monitors are in the lunch room, often times one parapro per every two tables. I believe that they can monitor the noise level while still watching for anyone who may be choking. I have worked in several other elementary schools and I have never seen socialization to be dangerous. While I believe that the staff members at Bishop are generally caring, I think that monitoring such a strict lunch room this gives off more of a "police" vibe than a friendly one. It shouldn't take screaming to run a lunchroom. *I would also like to see more things offered to get parent/families involved at the school. This could include: Veteran's Day celebrations, Grandparent's day, Thanksgiving/Christmas lunch, grandparents coming into the school to read, Awards day every 9 wks, etc.	1	5.00%
-Communication in general, but especially between administration and teachers. For instance, knowing ahead of time about things that are due, and maybe a little background of why we're doing it. -A little more celebration of kid's accomplishments, however not going overboard. 3rd grade doesn't have time to spend many days in awards ceremonies. :) Got to get them ready for that test. - A little more freedom to do fun things to promote learning, but again not overboard. We can't be going to assemblies and activities every day. :) For example, incentives for AR - more than the store, dress up days for incentives for fundraisers or book parades or units done in class.	1	5.00%
1) Communication. Often times decisions affecting faculty and staff are spread by word of mouth. I would like to see more direct communication between administration and faculty. We really don't mind faculty meetings when we are actively seeking solutions to problems or working together to improve BES. Just heard today that SACS is coming in January. Teachers need to know things like this. 2) Spread the workload. Several teachers are overworked because they are serving on almost	1	5.00%

all committees or teams. We have many talented teachers who are willing to serve, but have been overlooked. Teachers who have been on the leadership team for many years are tired. They have served faithfully and well, and they deserve a chance to "coast" for a little while. 3) Student and faculty recognition. We have students who do amazing things, but often have to read about it in the newspaper. We need to recognize the accomplishments of our students. We also have teachers who are involved in state level service opportunities, but receive no recognition for their accomplishments. The recognition does not have to be anything tangible, but just hearing, "Good job" goes a long way to boost morale. 4) Budget input. We used to have input into the budget requests by giving an accounting of how we would spend our budget monies. For the past several years, we have been operating our classrooms on $75 per classroom for the year. We spend a LOT of our own money in our classrooms which could be supplied by wisely investing the budget money in the classrooms. 5) Trust us to do our jobs. We love having administration coming to visit us. Please do not wait until time for formal observations before coming to see us. Please do not fabricate an observation...we welcome you into the classroom! 6) KEEP the cafeteria quiet. My nephew was one that was choking and due to it being quiet was able to be helped. People who want the kids to be able to talk because they talk at home do not understand how loud it gets in the cafeteria. I think a compromise could be reached by having the first 20 minutes quiet and allow them to talk for the last 10 minutes. Sorry, but you asked! :o)

1. Would like to see student achievement celebrated - would like to see students encouraged by offering them rewards/incentives. I know that other schools have "Character Day" Parades, Fun Relay events, Jump Rope for Heart is promoted (the way it should be), would like to have more opportunities for students to assemble together - author visits, pep rallies, anything to promote and encourage students to do their best and celebrate their successes. 2. Mr. Smith had a select, "chosen" few and that was unfair. Only select staff members were ever given the opportunity to be in "leadership" roles. This was not only unfair to those that were never allowed to feel important enough to be in those roles, but it was also unfair to the select few that were chosen for EVERYTHING. That is a lot of extra work to put on a few people. If you look through the names of the leadership team, data committee, grade level chairs, you'll find the same people are represented on each one. I'd like to see opportunities for all staff members to be included and at the very least, the grade level responsibilities to be rotated from year to year. 3. While our school does an outstanding job of many things, in my opinion there's no sense of warmth or welcome to the parents that visit. I'd like to see the front of our school become a more welcoming place, a place where we can celebrate the seasons, fall, winter (Christmas), spring, etc. 4. The lunchroom is a topic of debate for a lot of people. Personally, I appreciate the fact that it is so quiet in there. However, I believe that there can be some give and take. Maybe allowing them the opportunity to talk just a little would be a nice thing to do. 5. I would like to see the PTO allowed to be more involved. In the past they've been limited as to the things they were allowed to do for the staff and students.	1	5.00%
A Friendly office staff. Which I feel that is already happening. As the school nurse I talk to parents a lot and one of the complaints is how unwelcome they feel in the front office. Being able to talk to the you without a guard saying yes or no.(both parents and staff)In the past it has been difficult at times to ask questions and I feel you should be available .(I do realize there are times you will not be) To be frank in the past when things were asked a lot of times the person that asked the question was talked about when they walked out of the office . I know that will not be a problem with you but this is one of the reason's people don't speak up in meetings. Make it to where parents are welcome anytime.(Thanksgiving dinner this year we were told we did not have enough room for all the parents)I think we should encourage our parents to be here when they can. Recognize the other areas besides teachers in meetings (nurse, counselor, Library staff, paropro's etc...).	1	5.00%
Although I feel like the school does not need to really improve it would be nice to see a little bit more celebration...maybe a pep rally or two throughout the year.	1	5.00%
Communication is a big factor with me. Communication between the faculty and staff. When you have classrooms that are not in the building, it seems we are the forgotten bunch! We are always the last part of the school to find out about anything. always! Safety is another big factor. The ramp between the Pre-K portables can be a very dangerous place for children if they are not supervised. Children should not be allowed to be out on that ramp to the building by themselves.	1	5.00%
I especially like the importance placed on learning and not getting carried away with too much "fluff", however, I also realize we work with children and feel that we need to bring a little more fun back in the school day. I would like to see the strong discipline continued. I have been in schools where there is not enough discipline and it is difficult for learning to take place in that kind of environment. I also would like to see more interaction between the principal and the students.	1	5.00%
I feel that our students' achievements are not recognized on a regular basis in the local community paper. A system for sending articles to the Grantham Co Journal or PR person for our school is greatly needed. The final version of the Fine Arts Georgia Performance Standards were approved this past spring and the process of changing over from QCC's plus incorporating GPS from other areas is in the works and should continue to improve.	1	5.00%
I personally believe that communication is one of the biggest weaknesses our school has currently. For those of us that have many other duties outside of the classroom (I have SIX), we may not tend to know what is going on. This seems to happen very frequently. I know this can be improved upon by making sure everyone is on the same page. This is not a difficult task. A quick email or text, whatever it takes. I have been left in the dark on many things as a result. As far as change, I think bringing fun back to the school instead of always focusing on the higher end of Academic success, is necessary. Morale is low. These are tough economic times. We need to know that we are important instead of just being used as utility workers to be told to go everywhere and do everything all of the time. This could be done within our four walls without always relying on PTA to provide such a variety of needs like things such as ink to lunch. Bringing back things like PTA meetings wearing pajamas and reading while drinking hot cocoa with your kids, or parent craft night, or seasonal celebrations (kids who don't celebrate such things aren't there anyway or will speak up if we need to	1	5.00%

arrange something different for them.) I think it is important to bring back Chorus, The Technology Club, and the Academic Bowl team. My daughter was involved in such things when she came to this school and now my son can't. That goes for Field Trips too. I know there are budget crises but when my child hasn't been on a Field Trip since Pre-K and he is now in Second Grade, I think there is something wrong with that. Kids look forward to such things. I think also rotating duties would be good. Most of us really hate lunch duty. It is tedious and the children can be demanding and high maintenance all at once. I know I couldn't get completely out of it, but something different every now and then, might make it better.

I would like to see it more child friendly. I feel learning should be fun as well as educational. I think you can have both. We used to have story book character parades, pep rallies, and student achievement activities. I wish we could get back to doing those things.	1	5.00%
I would like to see more child-oriented activities. We used to have book character parades, visiting authors, and other "pep rallies" to make being here a little more fun. Of course, this does not need to be constant interruptions since we already don't have the time we need to cover all of the things we have to cover. Within the last few years we have had less and less "fun" activities involving students. I am sure parents would also love some type of change to the lunchroom rules. This has been an ongoing complaint for many years. It would also be a nice change for there to be a more even distribution of appointments to committees. It is sometimes difficult to be on 3 or 4 committees and continue to do your job to the best of your ability. (Not to mention neglecting your own family.)	1	5.00%
If and when money is available for teachers to spend for classroom materials (no matter what it is...print cartridges, technology, trade books, etc.), they should be allowed to spend it. $70 a year to spend only at RESA is not always sufficient. I (and many others) would like to see all certified teachers held to the same level of expectation, no matter what position. It would be so nice to celebrate successes and motivate students as a school. AR (or some type of reading incentive)is one area that needs more attention. We need to be doing a kick-off and celebrations that involve the whole school. I am sure we could learn a lot from the other elementary schools. It seems as if they do more than we do in this area. WE NEED PARTNERS IN EDUCATION! Having more volunteers in the school to read to students, etc. would be so nice.	1	5.00%
Bishop as many great qualities and there is always room for some change. I think a rotation of all parapro duties instead of the same duty every day. This will benefit the staff if they have to cover another duty at any time. I think the older students should have some talking privilege. I can understand the younger ones not talking because they would never eat.	1	5.00%
Not only Bishop, but in every school setting, it is essential that teachers understand or is sensitive to what their other colleagues' responsibilities, teaching styles, and interaction with students. No changes here, but maybe some improvement.	1	5.00%
Personally, I would like to see a stronger Character Ed. program. And as the counselor, that is probably up to me to make it happen!! Right now, the PTA runs our "Cougar of the Month" program where the selected children have a little party in the cafeteria each month. I don't want that to change...I just want to add to it, so that more real character instruction (and recognition) is taking place. Maybe we could implement it starting next year and I could research it more this year. I've also thought about having a guidance committee to help me make decisions about topics and programs the teachers would like to see me implement during the school year. I was afraid no one would like to be on a committee, but from our staff meeting on Monday, I think there is an interest. Again, it is something we could do next year, or something you could ask the leadership committee about.	1	5.00%
There are many teachers who lobby for the kids in their classroom creating an inequitable grouping of students due to parent requests. This is highly unfair and illegal to have such stacked classes. For any class to have 100 across the board on the CRCT, speaks volumes about the kids not the teacher.	1	5.00%
There are no perfect circumstances, but I believe that there is value in classroom distribution. Fortunately, in the three years of teaching here at Bishop, I have been seen as the "go get her". It is my number one priority in teaching to see student growth. I strive to collaborate and bring innovative ideas to see this take place. Unfortunately, data and numbers have not shown "growth" in my classroom. I wish that local, state, and federal systems would view "growth" in the same way that I do. I have thoughtfully considered how things could be different this year. By changing time and classroom management techniques and expecting the BEST, I can honestly say that this has been the best year yet! Everything happens for a reason, and I will continue to rely on God to help me see the best in "unfair" circumstances. The distribution of classes in not balanced across the grade level. I feel strongly about giving every child an equal opportunity to learn. When there are 16 "red folder/ resource" students, is EVERY child truly given an equal opportunity to learn when 9 of those 16 are placed in the same classroom? I don't look at my circumstances from last year, or even this year as a punishment. I see them as a reward, an opportunity to prove that I will always give my best! I just wish that we could make better use of ALL of the excellent teachers here at our school.	1	5.00%
We can definitely improve communication. We often learn about major issues "through the grapevine" before we are informed about them. Sometimes issues involving students are resolved at the administrative level without informing the teacher about the resolution. I understand that we have been in a state of transition and it has been easy for some issues regarding communication to slip through the cracks.	1	5.00%
Total	20	100.00%

Question 3 (Free response)
19 of 21 respondents answered this question.

What do you expect from Mr. Michaels as the principal of Bishop?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
*Let your yes be yes and your no be no. Be honest about everything. If you are asked about something that you don't want to discuss, say that. Be direct in your approach and honest. *If there is a problem with someone, go to that person and handle the problem rather than make blanket policies that hurt the morale of the school. Keep private conversations between you and a teacher, confidential. Do not share with friends or other teachers who are not part of the problem nor solution. *If you make a decision that is unfavorable, please explain it to the faculty. We all want to work together and hurt feelings can often be avoided by understanding the hows and whys of administration rather than by just making all things "policy" *Do not tell us that "this is coming from Central Office and it's out of my hands" if is not. *Treat us like you'd treat your family members....you may not always like us, but love us anyway. Warts and all, we're not sooo bad. *Trust us to have your back....and return the favor.	1	5.26%
-Honesty -Communication - Sincerity - Being involved in the education process (knowing the data, expectations, and jargon of a current classroom) and have a realistic picture of what is and can be realistically going on in the classroom	1	5.26%
Expect the best from us and communicate your expectations.	1	5.26%
honesty and fairness	1	5.26%
Honesty, support and fairness. I believe what is good for one, is good for all others. I don't believe in favorites.	1	5.26%
I expect that Mr. Michaels will bring new ideas and priorities to Bishop. I see these new ideas and priorities as a positive thing.	1	5.26%
I heard such good things about you from my friends at the middle school, that if you keep doing what you were doing...that should be just fine!! You may need to let me know what you want from me! I've only worked under two principals--Mr. Jackson and Mr. Smith, and both of them just left me to my own devices and let me run my program with very little input or oversight!! And that management style is fine by me...but if you want to know more about what I'm doing or want me to update you on things, please let me know.(I don't want you to think I'm ignoring you!!!)	1	5 26%
I hope that Mr. Michaels will continue to support teachers, yet be understanding of reality, too. I would like to feel that I can come to him with any issues or concerns. I would like for him to be understanding of the fact that we also have our own families that need us. I hope that there will always be an open door for discussion. I hope that he will continue to see children as children and not just numbers.	1	5.26%
I would expect you to stand behind us as staff and faculty as well as you can. I would hope that you would be compassionate with our different needs and situations that we may be dealing with at home.	1	5.26%
I would like to see him maintain the idea that our number one goal is educating children. I appreciate the fact that he is willing to listen to our concerns and consider our wishes. However, I hope that he will maintain that HE has the ultimate decision, as it will be impossible to please everyone.	1	5.26%
Just to be open, approachable, fair, non-intimidating, a good listener, and to be firm when need be.	1	5.26%
Leadership Kind Caring Loving to the kids(welcome hugs) I feel you are already all of these!!	1	5.26%
Support of all areas and the recognition of the unique contributions of each. High expectations of our students and faculty. Open communication in which ideas are considered.	1	5.26%
Support, availability, the sense that he is listening to us and not just trying to tolerate us while we are talking to him. I always felt like every time I left the front office - Mr. Smith was "making fun of me" when I left. I've witnessed him doing that on numerous occasions to many staff members and know that he did the same to me. It always made me insecure talking to him or asking for his help. I would like Mr. Michaels to be in our classrooms taking an interest in the activities that we work so hard on - making our parents feel welcome and loving our kids as much as we do.	1	5.26%
To accept nothing but the best from the students or the faculty and staff. To enjoy your job and the children.	1	5.26%
To continue the order and discipline that is associated with Bishop, support the teachers, and to provide a more equitable (fairness) assignment of students to classes.	1	5.26%
To do the best you can do and always be understanding.	1	5.26%
To know that these are children and to love them and let them know that he's proud of them but he also lets them know he is the Principal and he doesn't want any bad choices that they might make! To always have a open ear and heart when it comes to family problems! To have a Open Office for	1	5.26%

any questions or concerns!

To lead by example, strong decision maker who listens to concerns of teachers, but the final decision, based on data and other factors, is what he feels is right for the students and the Bishop family.	1	5.26%
Total	19	100.00%

Question 4 (Free response)
17 of 21 respondents answered this question.

List any immediate material NEEDS that you have in order to teach your students or do your job effectively.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Bathroom cups Cough drops Tylenol Motrin A safety box to lock up controls in .We have several kids on medicine and this would be very beneficial to the clinic.	1	5.88%
computer cartridge	1	5.88%
Get an extra copy machine and never run out of copy paper for the copy room	1	5.88%
I acquire all of my art funds through the Square One art fundraiser in the fall which involves every student in the school. I am able to purchase supplies I need through these funds.	1	5.88%
I don't have any immediate needs. But, I would like to have a little bit of input when it comes to budget time. That doesn't mean I expect to get a budget, but I would just like to know that I at least get to be heard. I know other schools have a counseling budget--however small it may be, but I haven't had any money for materials or professional development for several years. (it's probably because Mr. Smith knew I would spend my own money to take care of those needs)	1	5.88%
I have purchased what I need for this year. I shop all summer and hit all sales. I think I'm good for this year. However, I would like to request ink cartridges for my printer. They are quite costly and due to printing shortages, I am using my printer more than I usually do. In looking toward the future, we could definitely benefit from a second copier for our school. When the one we have is not properly functioning, it makes it very difficult to get copies made. We also have laser printers and color laser printers that are not being utilized to the fullest potential due to lack of funding for cartridges. Mrs. Feldman and Mrs. Jefferies husbands own Cartridge World and have always been willing to give competitive pricing for cartridges. Just a little FYI....	1	5.88%
I need a pencil sharpener. I used $29 of the $50 we were given at the beginning of the year for a new one. Well, it is already broken. :(I have been using a manual sharpener that I purchased from the school store. :)	1	5.88%
I think an ample supply of copy paper is always an issue. a good copier is the biggest issue of all in our day to day service to the students. Plenty of paper towels and hand soap in the classrooms and bathrooms.	1	5.88%
It is not immediate but it would be nice to have a few more headphones in the computer lab for people to use in case they do not have any.	1	5.88%
My Biggest need is TIME! I feel there are too many demands on all of us. I have been in this business for more than 30 years, and I feel we are doing the children a real dis-service by asking them to do more than they are developmentally ready to do. We are letting important basic skills slide because we are being asked to teach higher level skills at a young age and with such speed that students can't begin to fully comprehend and incorporate what is being taught. I need smaller classes so I can work more with students who get no help at home and are so close to success if only someone would spend some one on one time with them, or show them: "I KNOW YOU CAN DO IT AND I CARE ENOUGH TO HELP YOU GET THERE". Sorry, I got on my "soapbox" I am actually blessed to have the resources I have and the class size I have.	1	5.88%
Our copier in the teacher workroom is often in need of repair. If it continues to mess up, a new one may be needed.	1	5.88%
Printer cartridges...	1	5.88%
PRINTER INK	1	5.88%
Right now just general supplies like from a RESA order. If I thought longer I could come up w/ more. :)	1	5.88%
Some test protocols and a few tests.	1	5.88%
We always need more time for planning and preparation of learning materials. We need additional laser printers and copy machines. We had a laser printer on the west wing that broke and was never repaired. We also had a copy machine on the west wing until this year. It would be helpful if the copy machine and printer that we have functioned more reliably.	1	5.88%
We need another copy machine and the opportunity to pursue materials from alternate companies other than just RESA.	1	5.88%
Total	17	100.00%

Question 5 (Free response)
15 of 21 respondents answered this question.

What do you feel are the most pressing professional development needs for Bishop teachers and staff?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
-RTI practice where you actually practice going through what to put together -Technology improvements we could use to lessen our load. For instance, short course on Microsoft Outlook and other Office programs	1	6.67%
Can't think of any at this time!	1	6.67%
Character should be a reflection of our professionalism. I want to treat my job and students with the respect that most bank customers are given.	1	6.67%
Continue to move our Children toward excellence as is our motto!	1	6.67%
I am a true believer in technology's power to: -increase student interest and engagement -increase teacher efficiency -increase resources available to teachers (often free resources) -increase parent communication. Unfortunately we have several technology resources available to teachers that only a few of us use. Our technology trainings focus on the mandatory administrative technologies such as Infinite Campus, OAS, etc. The technologies that can help us enhance communication and access our available resources (such as Think Central, aspects of Accelerated Reader, use of parent email groups and electronic newsletters to enhance parent communication and minimize paper use) are not as crucial and so are not top priority for training. I understand that administrative computing requirements are a necessary and helpful reality and teacher time for professional development is limited. Still I am saddened that we don't have time to share an understanding of these readily available resources with other educators.	1	6.67%
I don't know about anyone else, but I need to learn how to communicate better with parents through a website or other technical avenue. I also need to attend counseling conferences to maintain my professional certification. I also need to learn how best to maintain counseling data and how to use it to show gains in student achievement.	1	6.67%
I feel paraprofessionals need more classes to take to keep their certificates up.	1	6.67%
I have effectively developed reading/language arts flexible groups, but I am REALLY struggling with math groups. I am excited to see what the professional learning day will bring next week. I believe that any opportunity to see flexible groups in practice would be beneficial for all of us.	1	6.67%
I think instead of being trained on Microsoft Word, Excel, and the like, which we never use-especially the Parapros, then maybe training on behavior. How to handle situations, sensitivity training, and a variety of other special classes or clinics that would better benefit us in our daily work routine. There is always a situation that we come across that we were never trained for.	1	6.67%
INCLUSION What does it take to make inclusion work? What are the responsibilities of the classroom teacher and what are the responsibilities of the special education inclusion teacher? How can we use these resources to better reach our students? CCGPS What on earth is the GaDOE thinking?! We need help in getting the word to GaDOE regarding the proposed changes in the standards.....NOW! Comments are due before Dec. break. GRASP We are trying very hard to implement progress monitoring and keeping up with RTI, but would like to have more information on how to use the data we're gathering to help our students more. RTI We would benefit from being more cohesive on the Tiers of Intervention and understanding the differences between the tiers.	1	6.67%
Once Again TIME and Less PAPERWORK & MEETINGS. I feel we were all educated well in how to teach students, but I don't feel we are given the opportunity to do our job.	1	6.67%
RTI	1	6.67%
Teacher Website updates(speaking for myself) The visual arts teachers (county wide)need a planning day to construct an ongoing curriculum using the new Ga. Performance Standards and insuring an excellent curriculum progression from elementary to high school.	1	6.67%
using data to plan and teach more effectively	1	6.67%
We need RTI training and support from administration concerning this process.	1	6.67%
Total	15	100.00%

Question 6 (Free response)
18 of 21 respondents answered this question.

What changes are needed with regard to the Bishop building and/or grounds?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
1) We need more dependable copier capabilities. 2) Our classrooms need to be dusted occasionally. The janitorial staff do a great job vacuuming, but we'd like for them to dust at least once a week as they go through the school. 3) We'd like to see swings on the frames of the 4th grade playground. We have only 4 swings for 100 kids. This would definitely be considered a luxury, but we'd appreciate them so very much! 4) Lights on the bus ramp would be greatly appreciated. Several teachers get to school before sunrise and don't leave until after sundown. It is very dark and potentially dangerous walking to and from our cars. I believe all the other elementary schools have lighted bus ramps and would like to see BES's lit for teacher safety.	1	5.56%
Flowers in the front of the school, changing it to match the seasons to give off a more "kid friendly" feeling.	1	5.56%
Hopefully, within the next year or so, the budget will allow for new carpeting. The carpet has been in place since the school opened. For the time being, serious cleaning would be very much appreciated. There are a couple of gutters on the bus ramp poles that need to be reattached. This may have been done recently, but if not, it seems as if the loose gutters could be dangerous.	1	5.56%
I think our building and grounds look awesome. The only thing I've noticed is some of the tables on the playground directly behind the computer lab need some repair. It has been mentioned before to have benches for the teachers to sit on. Mr. Smith wanted us standing.	1	5.56%
I think our building looks great! (thanks to Mr. David!)	1	5.56%
I think some greenery or something needs to be put in the front of the school. I think it would make the school look more appealing.	1	5.56%
I think this is an area that is just fine and is already being held to high standards. I do think the janitorial staff could do a better job of cleaning the bathrooms sometimes.	1	5.56%
I was concerned about Ms. Rose's vacuum cleaner and printer issues, but they have already been addressed. It would be nice to have a bench to sit on during recess. :)	1	5.56%
I would like to see some sort of security gate in the back so that parents cannot drop off in the back of the building by the pre-k portables.	1	5.56%
It would be attractive but not necessarily a must to have more trees or plants around the building.(possibly PTA project)	1	5.56%
N/A	1	5.56%
Student swings on the west wing playground need to be repaired. At one time we had teacher benches on the playgrounds that were removed. Our technology infrastructure also needs to be updated.	1	5.56%
The building has been maintained well. The playground needs some maintenance.	1	5.56%
The playground needs to be more safe! Things need to be fix and the grounds should be clean and picked up of items that might hurt a child! The door in the Cougar room needs to be fix and our girls toilet leaks! We need to have the picnic tables looked at in front and back and fix because parents sit there too! We have too many rooms that are not being use because of the 5th grade going to the Creek! Wish we had a better place for the parents to go eat with their child! Hate that the Pre-K's are out of the building too!	1	5.56%
We have a very clean building , I would like to see more kids art work on the wall in the cafeteria instead of it being so white!!!	1	5.56%
We need lights for the bus ramp.	1	5.56%
With weather safety in mind and the empty classroom availability, Pre-K should be moved inside. The lower grades playground could use more pea gravel and a few benches strategically located for supervision of the students.	1	5.56%
Working towards updating our electronics as in tv's and VHS to DVD's. Make more paved parking out front, so people don't have to park on the grass. Fresh paint in parts of the building or any updating that is necessary.	1	5.56%
Total	18	100.00%

Question 7 (Free response)
15 of 21 respondents answered this question.

Additional comments?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
I believe Mr. Michaels is sensitive to the needs of the students, parents, and teachers.	1	6.67%
I do feel the members of committees need to be spread out over more of the faculty and staff. For instance, right now I serve on at least 5 - 6 committees. I don't mind serving, but often feel very much overwhelmed.	1	6.67%
I feel truly privileged to be a part of the Bishop Community. I am invigorated by my fourth grade students and their thirst for learning. It is amazing what they can learn and achieve!	1	6.67%
I thought of a couple other things over the weekend that might be helpful suggestions. -awhile back we used to have a person or team that sent in information to the HC newspaper. I don't know that we have that now. If not, I think that is important. I notice the other schools in the paper a lot, but rarely see ours. -when planning for professional learning/inservice days, one thing that is probably different than the middle school about an elementary school is that we have a lot more prep for activities in our classes. Therefore, we need more time spent in our rooms. Just thought this might help w/ the transition from one to the other.	1	6.67%
I would just like to say Welcome to Bishop! I look forward to working with you many more years.	1	6.67%
I would like to see a rotation of job duties. It seems like the same parapros do the same job and it would be nice for just a little bit of a change. In the afternoons it would be nice if the teachers could rotate with parapros as well. The teachers would do some of the duties and we as parapros could do their afternoon duty.	1	6.67%
I'm sorry I do not want to sound cynical. Teaching has been the biggest part of my life, and I have loved it. It has never been a "JOB" to me. It's very difficult for me to see what it is becoming. I am very excited about Mr. Michaels's arrival. I felt Mr. Smith did a fabulous job at this school, but I feel like we were ready for a change. I think Mr. Michaels is the perfect choice for the task.	1	6.67%
Thank you for asking..... It makes us feel like our opinion is appreciated and valued. Just your asking for our input raises morale and makes for a better workplace. I don't think I'm alone when I say, Bishop is not just a workplace...it's an extension of my life. Thank you for being open and for valuing our input. Already, you are much appreciated!	1	6.67%
Thanks for being receptive and offering the opportunity for us to communicate with you! I am looking forward to continued growth as a teacher and making the difference for the future!	1	6.67%
We are so excited to have you, Mr. Michaels as our principal. Mr. Smith was in a lot of ways an excellent administrator. In my opinion, I believe that he was ready to move on and in the past few years grew tired of working in an elementary school setting. I would just like to encourage you to remember that we are an elementary school with young children that deserve to be treated as young children and are entitled to attend a safe, learning focus school, where teachers and staff love them and care about them - but also a place that is fun and helps to build a foundation that excites them and reminds them that learning can and at this age should be fun!	1	6.67%
We are so glad that you are here as our principal! Thank you for this survey! This shows us that you want to know and hear everything about us and this school! This is SO Special! As a Paro-Pro sometimes we feel like we are put on the back burner when we have a class with a teacher and she is out! We are told over and over that this is our class too, but when the teacher is out, we feel like we have someone else come in to replace her and the office acts like it is the sub's class instead of ours! All questions are ask to the sub and then the sub ask us! We know our class better than anyone else that comes in and this makes us feel like we are just here as a body! I understand that we can't have a class to our self but when we are needed we are pulled out of our class to cover another class! Sometimes we just don't feel very important to the school when it comes to our own class! Our salaries are so much lower than any teachers but when money is ask for, we are paying the same amount as a teacher! I hope I'm Not sounding cheap but times are hard! Thank you for all you're doing!	1	6.67%
We are very excited about Mr. Michaels being here at BES. You can tell that even the children already like him and want to see him. It is very obvious that he loves children and that is a great sign.	1	6.67%
We need to form a committee for the staff that will make everyone one aware of birthdays ,deaths ,sickness etc.... I wish that our 4th graders could make the morning announcements (moment of silence ,thought of the day, weather etc...) Allow the kids to talk at lunch, even if it is for 10	1	6.67%

mins.(with moderation) Book parades at Halloween\ Pep Rallies' once a nine weeks Just so you know I'm an awful speller this is why I am not a teacher!!!

Welcome to Bishop. I wish you all the best!	1	6.67%
Welcome...and we hope you feel at home here! (you have a wonderful ass't principal which I'm sure you already know!!)	1	6.67%
Total	15	100.00%

Appendix E

Bishop Elementary School Parent Survey: December 2010

Note: All school names and names of people have been changed to protect anonymity and confidentiality, as well as to coincide with names used throughout the study.

Question Summary

	Question	Question Type	% of Respondents Submitting
Details	Question 1	Yes-no	98.31%
Details	Question 2	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 3	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 4	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 5	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 6	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 7	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 8	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 9	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 10	Multiple select	96.61%
Details	Question 11	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 12	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 13	Yes-no	98.31%
Details	Question 14	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 15	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 16	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 17	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 18	Multiple select	98.31%
Details	Question 19	Free response	61.02%
Details	Question 20	Free response	55.93%
Details	Question 21	Free response	44.07%
Details	Question 22	Free response	20.34%

Question 1 (Yes-no)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

I am a parent of a student that attends Bishop.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Yes		58	100.00%
No		0	0.00%
Total		58	100.00%

Question 2 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Your student(s) is in which grade?

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Pre-K		5	8.62%
Kindergarten		9	15.52%
1st Grade		11	18.97%
2nd Grade		20	34.48%

3rd Grade		12	20.69%
4th Grade		15	25.86%

Question 3 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Bishop provides a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		45	77.59%
Agree		12	20.69%
Neutral		0	0.00%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly disagree		1	1.72%

Question 4 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Parent opinions are considered when important school decisions are made.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		12	20.69%
Agree		29	50.00%
Neutral		13	22.41%
Disagree		2	3.45%
Strongly disagree		2	3.45%

Question 5 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Parents and guests are made to feel welcome when they visit Bishop.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		39	67.24%
Agree		12	20.69%
Neutral		5	8.62%
Disagree		1	1.72%
Strongly disagree		1	1.72%

Question 6 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Our school grounds and building are clean and well maintained.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		45	77.59%
Agree		11	18.97%
Neutral		1	1.72%
Disagree		1	1.72%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 7 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Student learning and achievement are very high priorities at Bishop.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		41	70.69%
Agree		15	25.86%
Neutral		1	1.72%
Disagree		1	1.72%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 8 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Teachers use a variety of teaching strategies and learning activities to help students learn

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		33	56.90%
Agree		21	36.21%
Neutral		3	5.17%
Disagree		1	1.72%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 9 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Teachers challenge my student to do his/her best work.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		30	51.72%
Agree		22	37.93%
Neutral		3	5.17%
Disagree		2	3.45%
Strongly disagree		1	1.72%

Question 10 (Multiple select)
57 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Teachers give students extra help in class when it is needed.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		24	42.11%
Agree		22	38.60%
Neutral		10	17.54%
Disagree		1	1.75%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 11 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Our school recognizes the achievements of students for all types of accomplishments.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		24	41.38%
Agree		24	41.38%
Neutral		7	12.07%
Disagree		2	3.45%
Strongly disagree		1	1.72%

Question 12 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Up-to-date computers and other technologies are used in our school to help students learn.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		26	44.83%
Agree		24	41.38%
Neutral		5	8.62%
Disagree		3	5.17%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 13 (Yes-no)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

As a parent, I am familiar with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) and the GPS frameworks. The GPS outline and guide the content that is taught in my student's classroom.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Yes		51	87.93%
No		7	12.07%
Total		58	100.00%

Question 14 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Class sizes at our school are appropriate for effective learning.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		15	25.86%
Agree		28	48.28%
Neutral		7	12.07%
Disagree		8	13.79%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 15 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

All Bishop students, parents, guests, and staff are treated with respect, regardless of race, religion, or gender.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		38	65.52%
Agree		16	27.59%
Neutral		1	1.72%
Disagree		3	5.17%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 16 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Bishop teachers and staff effectively communicate with parents.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		29	50.00%
Agree		19	32.76%
Neutral		6	10.34%
Disagree		4	6.90%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 17 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

If I have a problem regarding school matters, Bishop staff members are available and willing to help me resolve the problem.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		30	51.72%
Agree		22	37.93%
Neutral		5	8.62%
Disagree		1	1.72%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 18 (Multiple select)
58 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Our school uses technology to communicate and provide parents with information about our school.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		23	39.66%
Agree		22	37.93%
Neutral		6	10.34%
Disagree		7	12.07%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 19 (Free response)
36 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Please comment on your overall perception of Bishop Elementary.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
I would gladly volunteer more, but we as parents are not made to feel very welcome at the school. I do not see the administration smiling or saying "hello" to the parents. I would also like to see the children be allowed to talk in the lunch room for the last 10 minutes of lunch. They need to be able to talk and let out their energy before going back to class. I have always wondered why they call the academic awards the "principal" Awards...when the principal does not give out these awards? Mrs. Jones has always handed these awards out to the children. There is such a 'stiff' feeling at this school, not fun and full of smiles. this is just my opinion. I would love to see the "Book Parade" implemented back into the program. The kids look so forward to this parade and it was cancelled several years back. i would love to see the school more parent oriented and friendly. Nobody wants to volunteer at Bishop because we feel like we are in the way.	1	2.78%
A very educated staff to assist the kids in all their needs. Let you know where your children stand in the school year. Would like to see that each child has a chance to visit with their peers at lunch. My grandson has a hard time with peers and if he was able to talk with his peers he may get over his shyness.	1	2.78%
After moving from a private school 2 years ago, we are extremely happy with our choice to come to Bishop! The school is inviting, organized, and extremely easy to feel at home at.	1	2.78%
Extremely satisfied	1	2.78%
great school	1	2.78%
Historically, Mr. Smith has run BES in an orderly and rigid manner, which can be good for teaching discipline. He has insisted on a level of standard that has been positive for the outcome of student performance. However, this has often resulted in an environment that is not always fun or pleasant for the students. For example, there is a cone system in the lunchroom which is supposed to warn the students when they are becoming too loud. However, they always have a silent lunch and never have the opportunity to speak quietly. Children have very little time in the school day for social interaction outside of the classroom setting. I think they should be allowed to have the opportunity to earn the right to behave appropriately then have consequences if they do not. I think it is important for the students to look up to the leaders in the school and respect their authority. Along with this, the students should be able to trust the principal. If there is a school event, seeing the principal there would show the students that he cares enough to be involved. Hosting a 'Breakfast with the Principal' is a great idea to reward straight A students. This should be an honor for a student to attend, unless the principal does not show up which shows the student that it really wasn't that important to him after all. I truly appreciate that parent requests for teachers have been honored... we have had wonderful teachers! I have had children at BES every year since 2003 and overall it has been a positive experience and I have been proud to say that my child(ren) attend Bishop Elementary. Thank you.	1	2.78%
I am overall very satisfied with Bishop. I am excited about the new principal. I hope he takes his time in making changes, but being swayed by his wisdom of the situation, not by what others with strong personalities or specific ties to the community, want him to do. I think that with the return of fun activities, awards banquets, festive celebrations, clubs, and other rewarding incentives, that the children will grow in their learning experience. My only complaint, next to sometimes the lack of proper communication or maternal warmth/"bedside manner" in certain teachers, that in addition to these things; I would have to say I am the least happy with the cafeteria. The staff is friendly but the food has gone downhill. I know that there are budget cuts, but the quality is missing. Prices are rising and the taste is becoming more poor. I realize it is mass produced and can't possibly be "like home", but certainly the appearance and taste could improve. If you charge more, then the quality should be better! Sometimes the food is so questionable- I would not eat it. My child brings his lunch from home about 90% of the time, as a result. There may need to be a better system of how to entertain the children during lunch. They are usually done in the first ten minutes. The last 15-20 minutes they are more apt to getting in trouble because they are bored. We do not sit at dinner at home for 30 minutes. I don't know what the solution is.	1	2.78%
I am very happy with Bishop Elementary.	1	2.78%
I am writing you to let yall know about your School lunch... I think it is the most crazy rule that any school could of come up with.. My son comes home EVEY DAY AND SAYS HOW HE HATES LUNCH AT BISHOP... he says mom we cannot talk to our friends at all during lunch or we get silent lunch.. what kind of School gives kids a lunch where they can NOT TALK AT ALL... They are in class all day my goodness give them a break ...how would you like to do work all day sit down with your friends (TEACHERS)and not be able to talk? I don't think it is right..... CHANGE THE RULE..... THANKS	1	2.78%
I believe Bishop Elementary is probably as good or nearly as good as any privately run school in the area. There exists a high degree of professionalism amongst the staff and that is reflected in the behavior of the majority of students there.	1	2.78%
I do agree that BES is a fantastic school and I am very pleased with the attention and learning opportunities that my child is afforded.	1	2.78%
I feel my child is getting a quality education in a safe and loving environment. The school climate is very positive and nurturing. I feel everyone is proud to be employed at this school...and it seems	1	2.78%

like everyone is a family.

I have been a part of BES since 2004. I have always praised BES and now have my 2nd child attending BES. I do however think there is room for improvement in some areas.	1	2.78%
I have been overjoyed with the education that my daughter has received at BES. She is going to be well-prepared for her middle school years at Riverside and GMS. She loves going to school, loves her teacher(s), loves to learn, and it is due to the environment she has been exposed to in her earliest years of learning. I appreciate all that the faculty and staff of BES have done to make my little girl's early educational years so productive. Thank you, and keep up the great work!	1	2.78%
I have had three children attend Bishop over the last four years and we have experienced each grade level. We have been happy each year with teachers, paraprofessionals, and other staff members. I feel that my children are being taught the GPS standards and are being well prepared for education that lies ahead of them. My family was new to the Grantham County area when my children began attending. We were made to feel welcome right away and my children became part of the Bishop "family" quickly.	1	2.78%
I have nothing, but great admiration and respect for all the staff. Mrs. Sutton is the greatest in helping children with special needs. She has been so great to our family with our children and helping determine the best teacher for the needs of our child. The nurse is so kind to the children. The front desk staff are wonderful, it is amazing how they know each child by name. That takes a wonderful person because I know it makes each child feel special not just a number lost in a crowd.	1	2.78%
I have really enjoyed having my children attend MC and I think it's a wonderful school!	1	2.78%
I have thoroughly enjoyed the last eight years at BES with my two kids. It is a school that pushes children to learn while maintaining a environment. The teachers are amazing!	1	2.78%
I LOVE BES!!!! there is not a day that goes by that you are not greeted with a smile. The teachers are friendly and compassionate, I would not move anywhere outside the BES district.	1	2.78%
I love the technology of the automated phone calls and emails. However, the school website is never updated. Some teachers are not even found in the correct place. Overall, I am very pleased with the school and the staff. One of my biggest concerns, that I have observed as a volunteer, is the lack of copy machines. I don't know how your teachers can possibly get all of their work done. They copy so much and with one copier, that often doesn't work, is tough. I try to help with the coping for my child's teacher and the 4th grade teachers. Some days it almost impossible. The copier gets jammed, or malfunctions and restarts itself, the feeder try usually doesn't work and you can't sort. It can be a long and painful process. Not to mention I always step aside if another teacher comes in to make a copy, which I'm happy to do, but it really slows the process. Just a second machine would make such a difference. I hear the frustration from the teachers and I feel their pain. Let's make their lives a little easier, their job in tough enough.	1	2.78%
I think that Bishop is one of the best in Grantham County.	1	2.78%
In my opinion, teachers at Bishop are more worried about perception than teaching. I do not think my children are challenged enough. Teachers seem to want to make sure that parents are not upset more than they want to make sure the children have a depth of knowledge. When asked, my children cannot tell me what standard is being covered in any of their classes. Another concern is that teachers perpetuate the idea of Bishop being "the Academy". I am worried that this will cause a problem with students from the other elementary schools when they all come together at Riverside. Finally, I am concerned about the amount of gossiping that goes on between teachers at Bishop. I have heard from teachers, para-pros and students at Bishop that it is common for teachers to discuss children and families in the community openly at school. I am pleased with the fact that Mr. Michaels has been named principal. I am looking forward to your leadership as I have another child starting next year.	1	2.78%
BES has always held their students to a higher standard than the other schools. That is the reason we chose a home in this school's zoning. I hope that the high standards for student performance and behavior continue with the new administration at BES. I would not want to see BES have the same reputation for lax discipline as GMS.	1	2.78%
BES is an exceptional school. It is evident that the majority of the teachers there truly take a personal interest in the ability for students to learn.	1	2.78%
Bishop is a great school! I love having my daughter in Mrs. Volger and Mrs. Moon class! The students are challenged and expected to reach to higher level of excellence.	1	2.78%
Bishop is an outstanding school with high standards and values. I am proud to say that my child is a student at BESS.	1	2.78%
My son is now in the second grade at Bishop and he has attended since he was in Kindergarten. We absolutely love Bishop. So far, he has had Mrs. White, Mrs. Stringer, and now he is in Ms. Thorn's class. It is amazing how much he has grown and learned during this time. Each of his teachers, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Jones, and Mrs. Emerson have always gone the extra mile to teach and guide John as well as communicate to us as parents. I appreciate Bishop Elementary and I am grateful to be a part of the Bishop family. :-) Welcome to Bishop Mr. Michaels!!	1	2.78%
Overall I have been pleased with Bishop Elementary, however I was very displeased with what my child's kindergarten teacher. It felt like her class room was a babysitting service and that all learning was to take place at home. A couple of examples are spelling words and sight words were never practiced or studied at school. My child had some coloring, cutting and gluing to do at school and math, spelling, reading, sight words for us to teach her at home. The sad part is that the teacher is the head of the Kindergarten program. I had another child go all the way through Bishop and luckily	1	2.78%

none of her school experiences were not this bad.

Overall, I think the school is great. I have two children that are in different classes in second grade. The differences in the teachers are HUGE! One is very friendly, welcoming and helpful. The other teacher doesn't take time with my child and I have been told that they yell at the kids in the class. I receive VERY little response from her as well, even after I have emailed her. I also have a problem with the children not getting to talk to one another at lunch, and taking outside time away as a punishment. They should at least be able to walk outside.	1	2.78%
Until recently, our school was not effectively using communication with parents such as email and this survey. I am pleased to see this change. This is the same for the level of friendliness and welcoming that is sensed from the main office. In the past it has been very "bothered" by parents coming into the office and very unwelcoming to visitors. I am VERY glad to see this change. The other area I hope to see change is the changes made regarding Christmas. 90% of our school are Christians that celebrate Christmas. But because of fear of 2% of our families, we were not allowed to have Christmas. This is very sad for elementary children. I also hope to see a change in the general attitude of the school. Before it was run like an institution where the students were more like prisoners. They were fearful of their principal and he ruled or dictated in such a way that encouraged this fear. I feel this was too much. They would never see him read to them, or play with them, or help their teachers in the car line. The only time they saw him was when they were in trouble or being warned to keep it in line. I take great issue with the fact that the children were not allowed to speak during lunch. They beg for parents to come eat so that they can converse with their friends. Social skills are being learned right alongside of their academics. What are we teaching them when they aren't allowed to have quiet table conversations? I look forward to and have already seen many positive changes. I am willing and eager to participate in any efforts to better BES. Thank you for asking our opinions, it means a great deal.	1	2.78%
Very friendly environment, conducive to learning. Provides a safe and structured environment for children. We are overall very pleased with the school and the teachers. We are relatively new to the school and the transition has been easier than expected. Teachers and staff have been very welcoming and helpful.	1	2.78%
We are a military family and have been in a variety of schools in numerous states over the years. We are to the Grantham County School District this year. Our family has encountered many different types of schools (public, private, and home school) over the years. Most recently our children came from private school. We have really enjoyed Bishop so far and I look forward to getting to know the staff and teachers better as the year progresses. My child enjoys going to school and is learning a lot of new things. I feel that his teacher does a great job at teaching each child on their level while keeping the class interesting for all the students. I feel that Bishop has really help my youngest with this transition and I'm truly grateful for that. I feel that the entire staff, not just teachers, are satisfied with their jobs and it shows in the way they treat the students. I think our entire family is going to enjoy our years in the Grantham County School District.	1	2.78%
We are happy with BES, and moved to the area 2 years ago, because of the good ratings. It would be nice, if the kids wouldn't have to be soooo quiet during lunch and could go outside more often even on wet days.	2	5.56%
We have moved in the middle of the school year. While this school is a beautiful, new school , I feel that my child was better challenged and more motivated and had more school pride at her previous school. The previous teacher also was more in touch with me concerning my child and her needs . Also, we have a pre k student that was denied attendance because there were not enough slots at this school, but was not allowed to attend another Grantham County pre k school. We were given no other options, except to put her on the waiting list. If she does not attend school, then she will be behind, so we had to place her at a pre k program at Fort Benning. Thankfully we had this option, but the school needs to have more placement available to accommodate this growing county needs.	1	2.78%
We love Bishop. All the teachers are wonderful. It is like a family.	1	2.78%
Total	36	100.00%

Question 20 (Free response)
33 of 59 respondents answered this question.

What do you believe to be the most positive aspects of Bishop?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
A caring faculty and staff, a challenging curriculum, and a commitment to what is best for the students	1	3.03%
A safe learning environment.	2	6.06%
academic emphasis	1	3.03%
Caring teachers and staff!	1	3.03%
Discipline	1	3.03%
High academic learning. Friendly personnel. Good location.	1	3.03%

I believe one of the most important aspects at Bishop is the strict code of conduct and expected from the students.	1	3.03%
I feel the best asset of Bishop is the staff. They are truly the ones who set the atmosphere of the school. Everyone that I have encountered seems happy and content with their job. Your janitorial staff have always been very friendly to me and they do their job with exceptional attention to detail. The school looks very well kept and it seems that everyone pitches in to make today glide by.	1	3.03%
BES teachers are extremely dedicated to the success and wellbeing of their students. They are very loving and willing to go the extra mile.	1	3.03%
Bishop Elementary has several positive aspects. Where do I start?!? First of all, Bishop has a family friendly, structured and safe environment, caring and knowledgeable staff, and most importantly, the children always come first. My son feels comfortable and happy at Bishop and as a parent that is a great feeling. We love being a part of the Bishop family. In fact, Bishop was one of the main reasons we chose to move to the area. :-)	1	3.03%
My child has not enjoyed being at this school, however she enjoys the lunch room and her choices! And it is a very nice new facility.	1	3.03%
My first impression as a new parent to the school last year was great. From the cleanliness and orderliness of the school to the warm greeting from all, made it a wonderful experience.	1	3.03%
My son enjoys school.	1	3.03%
Recognition of children for demonstrating positive behavior qualities. Encouraging family night on Wednesdays rather than have homework. We support that and would rather see extra homework on other nights so that Weds can remain free for family time.	1	3.03%
See above...sorry I did not see that there were more places to comment.	1	3.03%
The care of the needs of the children.	1	3.03%
The community of teachers and parents working together.	1	3.03%
The leadership team and all the workers there that make it such a clean and well managed school. A school for a kid to be proud to be able to attend.	1	3.03%
he most positive aspect of Bishop has been the friendliness of every body there. The staff is always warm and welcome.	1	3.03%
The personal interaction of the whole leadership team. I have had 3 children through BESS in the last 5 years and cannot say enough great things about the school.	1	3.03%
The quality of teachers and administration personnel at the school and the availability of each to communicate when needed.	1	3.03%
The school is very orderly and clean.	1	3.03%
THE TEACHERS	1	3.03%
The teachers and staff	1	3.03%
The teachers and staff (including Mr. Smith)are the most positive aspect of BESS. It is evident that the staff and teachers sincerely care about the children. Having a leader that believes and lives the values he expects of the staff and students is critical. Mr. Smith was a great example of this. I am looking forward to this continuing with Mr. Michaels.	1	3.03%
The teachers and staff members truly care for one another and it shows. They treat the kids like their own.	1	3.03%
The teachers and support staff!!!	1	3.03%
The teachers are a positive aspect of Bishop.	1	3.03%
The teachers are wonderful!	1	3.03%
The teachers!!! They are wonderful. I have always had great teacher experiences with my children. I talk about how great they are to other schools. The teachers are why my children have gone to and still go BES. Some of the teachers have become really close friends of mine.	1	3.03%
the TEACHERS!!!! The ones I have had the pleasure of teaching my child or supervising in after school have been absolutely wonderful. I could not have asked for more loving and caring people to be in my child's life and taking her on this incredible journey of lifelong learning.	1	3.03%
Very personable....teachers call my child by name when he enters the school...I feel teachers are enthusiastic about what they do and strive for excellence...it has been my experience that teachers go above and beyond to educate students...children are taught to value and respect their families...meaningful family activities and projects are implemented...I feel students are provided with character education and are rewarded for good behavior...I feel there is a good system in place for parent/teacher communication...I feel I am always informed of what is going on in the classroom and how my child is doing...parents are always made to feel welcome..	1	3.03%
Total	33	100.00%

Question 21 (Free response)
26 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Please provide suggestions as to what you believe to be Bishop's biggest opportunities for improvement.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
* Parent Involvement * Talking in the lunchroom * rewards after testing * Recognition of accomplishments from the students * Morning announcements done by the students * The flag being flown...we have a flag pole? * More updates over the telephone * More info on the sign!!	1	3.85%
Addition of clubs: chess club, foreign language,	1	3.85%
As a new parent I find the way that parents attend lunches with their child is a little confusing. My first time eating lunch with my son I got lost on the way to the parent lunch room, luckily someone saw us wondering the halls and helped us find the room. I'm not sure why parents and their children eat in a separate room, but I guess is has to do with space. It's nice to spend time with my child, but at his age he wants me to come more to socialize with his friends than just him.	1	3.85%
As stated above, I believe Bishop is a wonderful school and I would not want my son anywhere else. I do believe that an area that has opportunities for improvement is the After School Enrichment Program. My son attended this program during his Kindergarten year. We decided to make alternate plans for him due to our concerns. First of all, I believe the supervision could be improved. The roughness and lack of structure proposed an opportunity for injury. Also, the communication between the After School teachers and the parents could be improved. Due to the way the program is set up, this leaves very little time for communication between the students individual After School teacher and the parents. As an involved parent, day to day communication is essential. It would be great if some sort of consistent communication could be implemented for both teachers and parents. I believe this program has great potential and would definitely try it again.	1	3.85%
Better school website and more frequently updated with upcoming school events and schedules. Regular email updates from teachers about classroom activities. I like being able to access information electronically because it provides quick access(traditional paper handouts are good too but may get lost in the shuffle of school papers). I would like to see student performances at PTA events, such as musical performances, etc. Also, sometimes I don't feel like I am connected to what is going on at the school all the time or in my children's classrooms. I think more frequently updated website and/or emails might help.	1	3.85%
Cleanliness. Whenever I have walked into the restrooms I have been shocked at how they are maintained. Often times there is no soap available for those who wish to wash their hands. Hygiene On several occasions I have witnessed students entering the lunchroom straight from the playground or from their class and never told or made to wash their hands. I understand the lack of having time for every child to stop by the restroom and wash their hands with soap and water. However this does not excuse the lessons on hygiene being instilled in children. Doesn't each classroom have a sink available for students to wash their hands before eating? ESPECIALLY during cold and flu season.	1	3.85%
Corporate Sponsorship could provide local businesses in Columbus, Hamilton, and Fort Benning with the opportunity to be involved in our schools. Many companies have employees that have children at BES. They would love to be able to give money or time or donations of stuff. All we have to do is ask. This is a valuable resource and opportunity that we should not miss out on.	1	3.85%
Everything is great.	1	3.85%
For all teachers to utilize the online classroom pages and to keep them up to date. Many parents who are unable to come in the classrooms on a daily, weekly, and even sometimes monthly basis find the teacher's pages very helpful in keeping up with their students work (i.e. spelling words, vocabulary words, weekly assignments). All teachers should encourage AR more. Some do more than others, but there should at least by a per class or grade level goal for each student. I wish there was a little more leniency during the students lunch time. A little social time by allowing them to talk to their friends helps break up the day. Bring back some of the "fun days," character parade, more visits from local kids authors, etc. Or if they shouldn't be "fun" days, make them a reward for specific accomplishments.	1	3.85%
I believe with children with ADHD or any learning disability having a smaller classroom or extra teacher to give help for the children who do not get it as fast as the others would help alot.	1	3.85%
I can't think of anything at this moment.	1	3.85%
I will agree with a statement above in that the teachers communicate effectively with the parents. I do not however feel the same way about the administrative staff. While we still relatively new to the school, I don't feel like we have really been presented with the opportunity to get to know the administrators or to understand their philosophies. It would be nice if there were some sort of	1	3.85%

orientation for the families of new students to feel more a part of the BES family. I would also like to comment on the subject of not allowing the children to talk at all during lunch. I had been told by other parents (again, never formally from the staff) that the reason was due to a child many years ago nearly choking but was not immediately noticed due to the level of noise. While I understand the reason and applaud efforts to ensure it did not happen again, it seems quite extreme to now punish every subsequent student. Is socializing with their peers not also a very important part of child development? Why not take the opportunity to educate the children on the signs of choking and how important it is to get the attention of an adult nearby while allowing them that time to be kids and enjoy being with each other to talk over a meal.

In my opinion the greatest area of improvement is the state funded pre-k program. My child did attend and my youngest child will attend in 2011/2012 school year. I understand that this program is heavily monitored and funded by the state and the selection process is limited. However, Ms. Farmer did an outstanding job making this process seamless when behind the scenes her and the pre-k teachers worked hard to monitor and report the progress of all the children. I am unsure what the program and registration process will be in the upcoming year but I am a bit fearful knowing that Ms. Farmer will not be supporting as in the past. After many hours in the cold weather waiting in line it was very nice to have her there at 4am with a smile.	1	3.85%
LET THEM TALK AT LUNCH...	1	3.85%
Listed in answer #19	1	3.85%
more communication in format such as "blast" e-mails.	1	3.85%
My first area of concern is the "No Talking" rule at lunch. I strongly disagree. This is an elementary school. Even prisoners get to talk on their lunch break. I feel this is taken to the extreme. Lunch is a high light to the day and not being able to talk is a punishment. The children of BES envy other schools who have the privilege to talk at lunch. I know it has to be kept within reason but they are children! Parents have not been welcomed with open arms either. It has never been said but you get that feeling and the word gets around fast. Parents want to feel they can come to the school and feel welcomed and appreciated. Not a distraction or inconvenience. I also want my child to respect but not fear the principal. There is a difference. I want the children to be children, know their limitations but be able to feel calm and not scared. They should be comfortable at school. For some children this is the only safe place they know. And the only place they get love.	1	3.85%
Preparing the children for the changes they will experience in middle school. It was a big change for my oldest. Each school is run a little different. The teachers at the higher levels are stricter and expect the children to be more independent. Simple things like tucking a shirt in and goofing off may send you to the office at Riverside. The "Bishop" kids are used to a great deal of tolerance from their teachers, which I love, but makes the next levels a difficult experience.	1	3.85%
See above...sorry.	1	3.85%
Some of the teachers need to be re-evaluated for their teaching/communicating techniques. Children need more time to interact and talk to one another to develop friendships.	1	3.85%
Teacher parent communication. At our previous school, foreign language was offered to my child starting in kindergarten. Better electives and foreign language (such as Spanish) would benefit students greatly. Retention of a foreign language is much better if teaching begins at an early age.	1	3.85%
The biggest opportunity is in the area of accountability. All teachers should be held accountable to teaching and creating a learning environment in the classroom instead of providing a babysitting service.	1	3.85%
The car rider load/unload situation is a disaster. The teachers do a great job with a cumbersome and dangerous set up. It is a miracle that nobody has been injured with the flow of traffic through the load/unload zone as it currently exists. There should not be three lanes of traffic for students, teachers and parents to navigate. I believe it should be physically redesigned more similarly to that of the bus pick up zone.	1	3.85%
To allow the students to be able to talk in the lunch room.	1	3.85%
We would like to see more consistency in communication from the teachers as far as graded work is concerned. We were a little taken aback when our child received 2 low B's on a progress report recently. We had not seen any graded work, so we had no idea that she was not doing as well as we know that she can. In first grade we saw weekly papers that kept us in the loop. However, this year we haven't seen anything but school progress reports and report cards. With that said, we think that more consistency in this area could be improved upon.	1	3.85%
Your website could be used so much more effectively. Needs regular updates. A webmaster for your teachers would be great. They do not have the time to update their sites, which I understand, however, if someone could keep it updated for them it would be a great tool for information and cut down on papers and coping.	1	3.85%
Total	26	100.00%

Question 22 (Free response)
12 of 59 respondents answered this question.

Additional Comments?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
As a fellow educator, I am impressed with BES's dedication to excellence.	1	8.33%
Could the kids be able to talk quietly at lunch? It seems like a prison camp when you go in there at lunchtime.	1	8.33%
I love BES and hate to leave it after this year!	1	8.33%
I'm hoping to see a better working relationship with the PTO and the school staff than I've seen in the past. We should be working together to help not only the students but the teachers to make their teaching easier and more productive.	1	8.33%
LT THE KIDS TALK AT LUNCH	1	8.33%
Bishop is a wonderful school!! We are happy to be a part of the Bishop Family! :-)	1	8.33%
See above....sorry.	1	8.33%
Thank you for doing your best for the students.	1	8.33%
Thank you Mr. Michaels for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you. I appreciate you taking the time to see what is important to me as a parent.	1	8.33%
This is our last year for MC as my 2nd child will be moving on. Both my children and myself have enjoyed all our years at MC!	1	8.33%
We LOVE Bishop!!	1	8.33%
We love Bishop!!!	1	8.33%
Total	12	100.00%

Appendix F

Bishop Elementary School End of the Year Teacher Survey: May 2011

Note: All school names and names of people have been changed to protect anonymity and confidentiality, as well as to coincide with names used throughout the study.

Question Summary

	Question	Question Type	% of Respondents Submitting
Details	Question 1	Free response	100.00%
Details	Question 2	Free response	66.67%
Details	Question 3	Free response	76.19%

Question 1 (Free response)
21 of 21 respondents answered this question.

Please provide any suggestions for improvement that you have for the 2011-2012 school year.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
I think Bishop needs to have a hospitality committee. This committee could plan baby showers, retirement luncheons, and send flowers or food to those who have lost a loved one or are in the hospital. Mrs. Farmer is wonderfully gifted in planning things like this. She would be a great resource for us to use. She talked about how they do it over at Pine Ridge so she has some good ideas.	1	4.76%
Not having children ask friends to have lunch with them when their parents come to lunch. I feel this is a safety issue. Often the children are taken outside and allowed to play either on the concrete tables or the playground and this leaves them open for accidents that will later have to be explained to their parent. When children eat with their parents, please ask them to wait by the library for the classes to come out of the cafeteria; not to go to the teachers classroom to wait (some parents leave them there...unattended).	1	4.76%
*rotate paraprofessional duties *perfect attendance policy-excessive tardies shouldn't warrant perfect attendance *could there be a letter sent home from the office giving guidelines/rules for lunch visitors? (examples-food for guests, playing on playground, getting students back on time)	1	4.76%
1. Equal classrooms - in the past some teachers have had a room full of request in which it left other teachers in a grade level with all the students who had red folders and low parent involvement. 2. Disciplinary action plan - When is it appropriate to send a student to the office for disciplinary issues? How do you want us to handle discipline problems in our classroom? 3. Understanding when emergencies arise. I understand there are new sets of rules from different admins. But there are times when we may need to leave a little early or take care of situations that may arise. When in reason let us take care of those situations without punishing us. Many of us work way beyond the 3:20 work day..	1	4.76%
Any suggestions I might have had are already being planned for next year!	1	4.76%
Develop a more consistent coverage of our students' achievements in the local newspapers. Continue to develop a cohesive communication of goals/standards/needs between grade levels and special areas.	1	4.76%
Hmm.........can't think of any that have not already been addressed.	1	4.76%
I have enjoyed this school year. :) I am looking forward to many years here at BES under your leadership. Next year, I would like for all kids that were in tier 3 last year and need additional testing be sent over by the end of the first nine weeks if possible. Also, if there is a student that is in tier 2 that needs to be placed in tier 3, I would ask the committee to please move those students to tier 3 by the end of the first nine weeks. The committee at that time should collect additional data and send over to the central office by Thanksgiving Break for additional tier 3 testing. All tier 3 testing should be sent over by the end of the first semester if possible. Also, I think that students with ADHD should first be placed on a 504 plan and that should be a part of the data collection if the student moves to tier 3 and needs additional testing. This year the department had 24 initial evaluations and many of them were at the end of the school year. This is in addition to the re-evaluations and annual reviews completed by the department.	1	4.76%
I would like for parents who come to eat lunch with their child to eat only with their child and not pick another student to eat with them for several reasons. If a child knows their parent is coming to eat lunch with them it's disruptive from the beginning of the day because all student's want to eat with them and beg them until lunch. It's also a liability because some parents take the children outside to eat and they play on the playgrounds. Sometimes parents bring foods from outside sources (such as McDonald's, etc.) and give the food to students who eat with them. Some students may have allergies to the foods given to them. I really believe that the parents will welcome only being able to eat with their child and not other students.	1	4.76%

I would like to start by saying, how GREAT this school year has been and how it has changed for the GOOD. I would like to see some improvement in how the library is used! I have already heard good plans for next school year as far as this goes. Also- I think the PTO should be better structured. We need more advanced planning for events and PTO meetings.	1	4.76%
Implement the plan in place to provide a paraprofessional to assist fourth grade with RTI progress monitoring and interventions and other clerical tasks such as; filing, copying, preparing student folders etc. This is a fantastic plan that will allow for more consistency in RTI responsibilities and free up valuable teacher time. More teacher time will result in better plans and instruction. Improve the quality of school lunches by including a salad bar and more fresh fruits and vegetables for students and teachers.	1	4.76%
It would be nice if there were structured lessons in the library following the GPS standards, instead of just a movie or color sheet. I think the students would like it if they could have gym outside from time to time, weather permitting. It would be really awesome if the younger kids could learn the game of kickball in gym. When parents come to have lunch with their child, it would be really helpful if parents were asked by the office to meet the class in the lunchroom. Occasionally, parents come to meet us at the room and will come in early during instruction and it can be a big disruption to the younger students. Parapros would appreciate some consideration in the possibility of swapping around morning duties at some point throughout the year.	1	4.76%
Just keep that line of communication open. I think that has been a wonderful improvement that should stay in place. Maybe a form like this that could stay open all year to provide feedback.	1	4.76%
Just knowing the vision that Mr. Michaels has for us and where he sees us going is wonderful improvement! I think knowing that documents like our school improvement plan are real working documents and not just ideas written on paper that get filed away is not only an improvement but also a reason to get teachers more involved in continuing to help reach those goals and new visions in place now!	1	4.76%
Parents can walk to their child's room any time of the day without the teacher knowing and it disrupts the class.	1	4.76%
Please continue to allow teachers to use their professional judgment on how to best teach their students.	1	4.76%
Please don't allow a student whose parent has come to eat lunch with him choose a "friend" to join them. This would eliminate confusion among the students. Sometimes, a friend gets upset when not chosen. Plus, sometimes the kids argue among themselves over who is going to be chosen. In addition, we could have a safety issue should the visitor(s) go outside with the kids to eat. Sometimes, the students start playing and may get hurt.	1	4.76%
Please equal out the classes!!!!	1	4.76%
The only two improvements that I felt would be beneficial to our school have already been discussed. 1. Help with progress monitoring and data input for RTI. 2. Guarded instructional time.	1	4.76%
The students taking friends to lunch caused a bit of a disruption last year. It would probably be better if the students were not allowed to take a classmate to lunch. Also, when parents would come to lunch, they would bring their child back to the classroom before the class returned from lunch. They should bring the children back to the lunch room or wait in the hallway.	1	4.76%
There is one safety issue that needs improvement here at BES. I really love how parents come and eat with their children, but I feel as though when the child picks another child to eat it opens the door to many situations. The children often play during lunch and don't eat and what if the other child gets hurt while under another parent's supervision...who is held responsible..the teacher?!	1	4.76%
Total	21	100.00%

Question 2 (Free response)
14 of 21 respondents answered this question.

Please provide any criticisms you have for the 2010-2011 school year.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
1. Having to take leave for situations we haven't in the past. Such as leaving for a funeral and coming back to school. Leaving at 1:30 or later for a Dr. Appt. Or having a early blood work or dr. appt and able to return to work in a timely manner. For example someone going through fertility treatments would have 7:00 appointments several times a week and if the person had to take a half of a day each time there would not be any days to take for maternity leave.	1	7.14%
Considering all of the changes this year I feel that the year went pretty smoothly.	1	7.14%
Distribution of personnel was uneven. Very small classes with 2 teachers in younger grades, very large classes with 1 teacher & not enough support in 2nd - 4th. Distribution of available funds was not based on our priority needs for student learning. Decisions were sometimes not based on our priority needs for student learning.	1	7.14%
From December forward, this has been the best year so far that I have worked for BES. Any criticisms I would have had have already been addressed by new administration!	1	7.14%

	Number of Respondents	Percent
I believe that your leadership has shined a light on Bishop. I think you are doing a great job and don't have any criticisms.	1	7.14%
None other than the "friendship" issue at lunch.	1	7.14%
None, I think it has been a great year, many changes and transitions that had to occur went very smoothly.	1	7.14%
none....a great year....	1	7.14%
The only thing I can think of is just be careful not to micro - manage. I know some of this is necessary while learning about the school and this age group	1	7.14%
The year went very smoothly considering the transition of administrators, Advance Ed visit, etc. This is not intended to be a criticism of any individual or criticism of staffing decisions. What follows is an observation from a teacher, grade level perspective: It was very difficult to collaborate on lesson plans and divide the content area responsibilities this year when one of our team members was working in afterschool from 2 pm daily. I know that the afterschool program has improved dramatically under this team member's leadership and that the afterschool program is very important to our school. Our grade level is a planning intensive grade level due to the number of content areas that are tested on the CRCT. It was very difficult to have one fourth of our team absent in the afternoon and to have so much of our team members time required in another area. This will be different next year. I will greatly miss this team leader being on our team but will appreciate having a fully staffed team. Please keep these observations and thoughts confidential.	1	7.14%
The year went very smoothly, especially considering all the changes that occurred at once. We are pleased to have such great admins.	1	7.14%
There were times in the beginning of the school year where other things took priority over student learning time. Although this was closely corrected the second half of the year, I feel that student learning and safety are the most important things that we as teachers are dealing with during the course of our day.	1	7.14%
This has been a wonderful year despite the change of administration in the middle of the year.	1	7.14%
We would like to be able to attend our personal children's ceremonies, celebrations etc. whether in our building or another without being charged leave or feeling guilty for asking.	1	7.14%
Total	14	100.00%

Question 3 (Free response)
16 of 21 respondents answered this question.

Please note any commendations you have for the 2010-2011 school year.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
*love the weekly notes Mr. Michaels sends *appreciate the visibility, interaction, and genuine care of everyone from administration-WOW! *the culture of this school has changed so much, and it is so appreciated FROM GOOD TO GREAT!!!	1	6.25%
Administration visits the classrooms DAILY, and knows what is going on in every room. Your presence in our classrooms lets each teacher and student knows you value what we're doing. It also gives you the knowledge and understanding of our needs to drive decision-making. Administration talks with ALL teachers to determine needs and make decisions. We feel our opinions and suggestions are valued and used. Decisions have been based on what is best for students and learning! Administration is very friendly with the students, and involved in what they're doing. Students feel very comfortable with administration, but also have great respect!	1	6.25%
All in all, I thought this year went great! Mr. Michaels and Mrs. Jones have been extremely supportive!!! I love the visibility of the administrators and their easy accessibility.	1	6.25%
Gains made in CRCT with subgroups and regular students. Communication between admin and faculty and staff. Sharing of leadership roles among all faculty and staff.	1	6.25%
I am thankful that God brought you to Bishop! This family of teachers will continue to give their very best because of your open communication and support. I look forward to the years of teaching under your supervision and guidance.	1	6.25%
I know many people have told you this but it doesn't hurt to hear it again. I appreciate you involving us in the decision making that impacts us and our classroom of children. I think you have great leadership skills. I loved the CRCT blowout event you planned and the reward party afterwards. It meant a lot to the kids. You are doing a great job. I can only imagine how hard it was to come in mid-year. You handled it wonderfully. I hope you have a great summer with your family.	1	6.25%
I like how the administration's presence is known throughout the school during the day. We like the open door policy and how Mr. Michaels or Mrs. Jones are available for teachers when needed. Mr. Michaels, we like the interaction with students in the hallways during the day, during dismissal, and in the classroom. I love that the school now has the feel of an elementary school (fun displays on the wall, etc.) and how teachers are receiving appreciation/praise and thank you throughout the year. (the e-mails are great!) I liked the incentives for CRCT, really helped to motivate the students. I like how we are moving more to a shared leadership among teachers, instead of one teacher	1	6.25%

having all the leadership positions. We really like how teachers and parents are being asked for their input on different matters concerning the school. I liked how the specials teachers were included to help out during field day. The kids enjoyed seeing them on field day. I like how the ice cream is now being served during lunch to the younger students. Thank you Mr. Michaels and Mrs. Jones for a great school year! The changes that have already been made are fantastic and we look forward to next school year!!!

I think we reinstated some great things for the students to enjoy this year. It feels like an elementary school again. While this is wonderful, I also feel it very important to have a balance w/ this and not go overboard.	1	6.25%
It has been great seeing the interaction between you and the children this year. Our school is once again a child centered school. Children are the reason we are in this business and they want to be loved, feel safe and accepted, and have fun! I am excited to see the changes you have to make our school better. Each Sunday my pastor ends his sermon with the saying: "The Best is yet come!" I see that for our school. We are a great school but we can become greater. We see that you have a vision for our school and want to make it better by including fun with academics! I look forward to the great changes that are in store for 2011-2012.	1	6.25%
Morale here at BES has sky rocketed since Mr. Michaels has joined us. The atmosphere is wonderful and that makes a tremendous difference in not only the attitudes of the adults here but in the attitudes of the children as well. I am so proud of our school and our CRCT scores!	1	6.25%
Note #1 comment	1	6.25%
Recognizing teachers for "going the extra mile" is a plus.. Our custodial workers are wonderful and need to be commended.	1	6.25%
The ASEP program has improved. The administration is much more child-centered, focused on teacher support, focused on protecting planning time, and has an increased focus on teaching and learning. The atmosphere in the school is more positive and warm.	1	6.25%
The changes here at Bishop have been great! I feel as though we have a great new administrator who really cares about the faculty and the students.	1	6.25%
The CRCT incentive and reward for the whole school!!!	1	6.25%
YOUR OPEN DOOR POLICY! I liked seeing you in the classrooms, your communication with the students, your all around positive attitude. The all around environment that you allowed BES to have! The student praise and encouragement- pep rally, movie day, etc	1	6.25%
Total	16	100.00%

Appendix G

Bishop Elementary School End of the Year Parent Survey: May 2011

Note: All school names and names of people have been changed to protect anonymity and confidentiality, as well as to coincide with names used throughout the study.

Question Summary

	Question	Question Type	% of Respondents Submitting
Details	Question 1	Yes-no	100.00%
Details	Question 2	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 3	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 4	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 5	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 6	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 7	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 8	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 9	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 10	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 11	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 12	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 13	Yes-no	100.00%
Details	Question 14	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 15	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 16	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 17	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 18	Multiple select	100.00%
Details	Question 19	Free response	61.36%
Details	Question 20	Free response	54.55%
Details	Question 21	Free response	40.91%
Details	Question 22	Free response	15.91%

top

Question 1 (Yes-no)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

I am a parent of a student that attends Bishop.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Yes		44	100.00%
No		0	0.00%
Total		44	100.00%

Question 2 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Your student(s) is in which grade?

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Pre-K		7	15.91%
Kindergarten		10	22.73%
1st Grade		9	20.45%
2nd Grade		16	36.36%
3rd Grade		9	20.45%
4th Grade		10	22.73%

Question 3 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Bishop provides a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		29	65.91%
Agree		15	34.09%
Neutral		0	0.00%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 4 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Parent opinions are considered when important school decisions are made.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		14	31.82%
Agree		19	43.18%
Neutral		10	22.73%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly disagree		1	2.27%

Question 5 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Parents and guests are made to feel welcome when they visit Bishop.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		27	61.36%
Agree		17	38.64%
Neutral		0	0.00%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 6 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Our school grounds and building are clean and well maintained.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		32	72.73%
Agree		10	22.73%
Neutral		2	4.55%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 7 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Student learning and achievement are very high priorities at Bishop.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		32	72.73%
Agree		11	25.00%
Neutral		1	2.27%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 8 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Teachers use a variety of teaching strategies and learning activities to help students learn

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		28	63.64%
Agree		12	27.27%
Neutral		3	6.82%
Disagree		1	2.27%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 9 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Teachers challenge my student to do his/her best work.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		27	61.36%
Agree		12	27.27%
Neutral		3	6.82%
Disagree		2	4.55%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 10 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Teachers give students extra help in class when it is needed.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		18	40.91%
Agree		16	36.36%
Neutral		7	15.91%
Disagree		3	6.82%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 11 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Our school recognizes the achievements of students for all types of accomplishments.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		22	50.00%
Agree		18	40.91%
Neutral		3	6.82%
Disagree		1	2.27%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 12 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Up-to-date computers and other technologies are used in our school to help students learn.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		18	40.91%
Agree		21	47.73%
Neutral		3	6.82%
Disagree		2	4.55%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 13 (Yes-no)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

As a parent, I am familiar with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) and the GPS frameworks. The GPS outline and guide the content that is taught in my student's classroom.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Yes		35	79.55%
No		9	20.45%
Total		44	100.00%

Question 14 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Class sizes at our school are appropriate for effective learning.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		6	13.64%
Agree		21	47.73%
Neutral		10	22.73%
Disagree		6	13.64%
Strongly disagree		1	2.27%

Question 15 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

All Bishop students, parents, guests, and staff are treated with respect, regardless of race, religion, or gender.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		27	61.36%
Agree		16	36.36%
Neutral		1	2.27%
Disagree		0	0.00%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 16 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Bishop teachers and staff effectively communicate with parents.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		18	40.91%
Agree		15	34.09%
Neutral		4	9.09%
Disagree		5	11.36%
Strongly disagree		2	4.55%

Question 17 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

If I have a problem regarding school matters, Bishop staff members are available and willing to help me resolve the problem.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		24	54.55%
Agree		14	31.82%
Neutral		3	6.82%
Disagree		3	6.82%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 18 (Multiple select)
44 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Our school uses technology to communicate and provide parents with information about our school.

		Number of Respondents	Percent
Strongly agree		19	43.18%
Agree		19	43.18%
Neutral		3	6.82%
Disagree		3	6.82%
Strongly disagree		0	0.00%

Question 19 (Free response)
27 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Please comment on your overall perception of Bishop Elementary.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
We are so pleased with Bishop and feel blessed that this is where our daughter attends.	1	3.70%
Clean, positive learning environment with friendly staff and teachers.	1	3.70%
Coming from a private school we were worried but now we know what a great faculty and curriculum Bishop has to offer: our children love Mr. Michaels. We are lucky to have him. You can tell he enjoys his job.	1	3.70%
Great experience. Professional staff.	1	3.70%
I am extremely pleased with Bishop Elementary School! Academics are a top priority at the school and students are always encouraged to do their best.	1	3.70%
I am very pleased with BES. I feel our family has definitely become part of the Bishop family. The union between home and the classroom is strengthened by an emphasis on family involvement and activities, which in turn help make the learning experience as a whole a success. I am somewhat familiar with the GPS framework and state curriculum, and it is evident to me through school and teacher communications, that BES does an excellent job at following and incorporating these guidelines in every classroom experience. From a parent's perspective, the transition of principals seemed to be very smooth. Mr. Michaels has done an outstanding job of jumping right in and meeting the students and their families and supporting the school at all events. My children have praised him on many occasions and feel comfortable just stopping by his office to say hello and check in.	1	3.70%
I am very pleased with the turn around that Bishop has made since the Fall. I see a difference in so many areas. My child also feels more at ease when she walks down the hallways and going through her daily life at school. I love the fact that Mr. Michaels is involved with every part of the school. You always see him walking through the halls, out on the playground, and being a friend to the children. I love the atmosphere that Bishop has now. A principal can make or break a school and Mr. Michaels has surely saved the school and made coming to school a joy not only for the students but for the parents. Maybe being able to talk at lunch will be the next change!!! We are looking forward to another great year about Bishop!	1	3.70%
I can always email teachers and other staff with concerns and receive detailed, quick responses. Email works best for me due to my work and they seem willing and able to accommodate me by every means possible! Great job!!	1	3.70%
I feel like BES is the BEST elementary school in HC.	1	3.70%
I have a child with anxiety/ADD. BES staff have been most helpful with helping him get the education he is entitled to. I love the warmth and comfortable environment that BES has. Thank you to the faculty and staff for providing this.	1	3.70%
I just have one complaint overall. I think the kids making A's all the way through their elementary years should be recognized in a better way than just a sheet of paper. Making A's throughout every year and then leaving that school being promoted should have a much better recognition than a paper award. Other than this, I am a proud parent to of had my child be in Bishop Elementary all of her elementary years!!!!! Thanks Bishop	1	3.70%
Bishop Elementary is an excellent learning facility that provides the utmost educational experience for students. The Bishop teachers and administration also provide care, respect and dedication to each individual student. We absolutely love Bishop and we are blessed to be a part of the Bishop family. Justin and Jennifer Williams (Hunter William's Parents)	1	3.70%
My children have received an excellent education in a safe and happy environment over the last 5 years. We have not had one negative experience. The staff and administration are extremely receptive to the needs of our children. As parents, we cannot ask for much more. I would love to see	1	3.70%

Bishop have-as all Publix schools need, nationwide--more teachers, smaller classroom sizes, additional funds to keep up with the technology, etc. Understanding this is not at the control of the school level, Bishop does a great job with what is provided. Keep up the great work and let's continue to make Bishop Elementary the best that it can be!

My only issue with my child's 2nd grade year, was I NEVER heard from the teacher. I would email, send notes and NEVER once got a reply to me emails or notes. I think if the teachers are going to offer those as ways to communicate, they should use them.	1	3.70%
My only suggestion would be...I sent several emails to my sons teacher, notes and ect and NEVER rec'd a response back. My son did not have many issues thru out the year and his grades were very good. But on the occasion that I sent a note or email, I would have liked to have a response. Other than my son's teacher I did not have any issues at all. I do not need a note every single day but on occasion would have been nice. Not to have ANY contact with the teacher except at the meet and greet did not set very well with me. I understand they have 20+ kids to tend with and 20+ parents. But if we email asking them a question a quick response would have been nice. I was trying to have school and home be on the "same page" with my son.	1	3.70%
My overall perception of the school was good ,i didn't feel that connection with the teachers.	1	3.70%
Once Mr. Michaels took over the school communication increased from the office, not from the teacher who lacked in timely communication. Overall the school is wonderful, I do feel the teachers should be more closely monitored as far as how and what they communicate to the parents.	1	3.70%
Our child already uses the computer, more technology is needed to challenge the students.	1	3.70%
The afterschool program is not good. The students watch a lot of TV. It seems the teachers are grading papers or planning next weeks lessons instead of interacting with the kids. The past Afterschool Director had a schedule that included; art, games, outside play, gym, snack and homework time. Every day the children are just sitting there with the backpacks on their backs at pick-up time. They use to be playing with "Table Toys" at this time. I use to see art come home. The ASEP seemed more "E" enriching before Ms. Bowen.	1	3.70%
The environment makes you feel like you are part of the family and every member of the staff takes a vested interest in the well-being of my child.	1	3.70%
The newsletter this year has been a great addition. Mr. Michaels is very accessible, very visible. and several of us parents have commented on how nice it is to see him out front every day for the flag raising in the a.m. He is always out front for pick up time and is always approachable. We appreciate so much that the lunch silence has been changed to soft talk, what a difference that makes in the development of socializing skills of the kids! My husband and daughter and I loved the Bishop Cougar mascot, I was expecting a cartoonish costume but he's awesome, very cool, and all the kids loved him. And Mr. Michaels's escorting him around at his introduction at the spring fling was great PR. I also have so much respect for all the teachers we've been privileged to experience, the front office staff, the vice-principal, the lunch lady, the janitors, and anyone else I might have missed. This is an awesome school!!!	1	3.70%
Very pleased. It was a great year.	1	3.70%
We absolutely love Bishop. My children are learning and growing so much. Bishop is a public school with a private school "feel" to it. All of the teachers and staff are wonderful and you just know that everyone wants the best for you child. We are so grateful that our children are able to attend such a wonderful elementary school. What an awesome start to their education!	1	3.70%
We love it!! We would like to see our child's work more often. Papers only came home every once in a while, and folders were not reviewed by the teacher often. Some things we sent were not read/commented on for several days.	1	3.70%
We love BES. My youngest has done very well there. Her teachers have loved on her and helped her become the successful young lady she is. My oldest left there 2 years ago and didn't have quite the success that she has.-but it wasn't BES's fault. I wish this survey was available then. Several of us knew (myself, teachers, Mrs. Sutton, Mrs. Jones) that he was struggling BUT we could never get him what he needed. It had NOTHING to do w/BES because everybody there tried to help him and they did so much for us...it was the Board of Education that let me down. So for the record, I must say that BES went over and beyond to help us.	1	3.70%
We love Bishop and have enjoyed the new changes during the spring. My children love Mr. Michaels. They were so excited that he would eat lunch with each of their classes. I would also like to thank Mr. Michaels for being present at the awards program and personally presenting each award. This meant a lot to my children that the "principal" took time out to shake their hand and congratulate them. I believe Bishop is establishing a warm atmosphere and making "kid friendly" changes while maintaining the high standards that Bishop is known for. My only concern is the high class sizes. However, I understand that this is due to budget cuts and often out of the school/systems control at this time.	1	3.70%
We love Bishop and are happy to be part of the family.	1	3.70%
Total	27	100.00%

Question 20 (Free response)
24 of 44 respondents answered this question.

What do you believe to be the most positive aspects of Bishop?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
The most positive aspects of Bishop include a structured, family oriented environment that provides the best learning opportunity for each student. Also, the dedicated and proactive teachers and administration enables parents to have an active role in their child's education.	1	4.17%
-Academics -Parent involvement encouraged -School safety	1	4.17%
Again, the emphasis on family involvement and encouragement of family night each week is very positive. Also, the children's unique strengths are encouraged by their teachers and the children are rewarded for academic excellence as well as in the fine arts and physical education, citizenship, etc. I think this is great for the students.	1	4.17%
Discipline. The students learn to be disciplined socially as well as academically. Yet, at the same time have fun. They achieve this balance well.	1	4.17%
Family atmosphere, excellent staff, order.	1	4.17%
Friendly staff and principal	1	4.17%
High academic standards	1	4.17%
I love that we always feel welcome. It makes you excited to attend activities .	1	4.17%
It is a remarkably clean school. Also, all the teachers are great.	1	4.17%
It was always clean. Mr Michaels listened and think he handled the one situation that my son had very well.	1	4.17%
Bishop has a very loving and caring staff. Anytime I have written a note with questions or concerns, I've received an immediate response with either a phone call or hand written note. The school does a great job with positively reinforcing the behaviors that they want to see in the children.	1	4.17%
Right now I feel that the most positive aspects of BES are Mr. Michaels and Mrs. Jones. They are a great team and I appreciate the respect they have for our children and parents. They are both very positive influences. I think it is good for the students to see them mingling and not see/view them as somebody they see only if there is trouble.	1	4.17%
Staff	1	4.17%
The chance for kids to excel at individual levels. Children aren't left behind or held back	1	4.17%
The positive atmosphere. Good things can happen in an environment that evokes success.	1	4.17%
The quality of teachers and the involvement of the administration with the children and classrooms.	1	4.17%
The staff's passion for their job, paired with the level of parental involvement. The staff includes the loving lunch ladies and the wonderful janitors.	1	4.17%
The teachers	1	4.17%
The teachers I think the mascot was a great addition to the school. The new principal has a much nicer disposition. Changed the whole atmosphere in a positive way.	1	4.17%
The teachers and our new principal!	1	4.17%
The teachers and staff genuinely care for the children and want to see them all succeed and reach their full potential.	1	4.17%
The teachers and staff were up beat and positive.	1	4.17%
We are so happy that Mr. Michaels has joined our school. He is loved by students, teachers and parents. The support that he shows for the teachers and all PTO events is such a positive influence for all. Love the automated email and phone call reminders.	1	4.17%
Willingness and ability to communicate and very open and clear with the communication. Leaving no room for misunderstanding.	1	4.17%
Total	24	100.00%

Question 21 (Free response)
18 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Please provide suggestions as to what you believe to be Bishop's biggest opportunities for improvement.

	Number of Respondents	Percent
?	1	5.56%
Awards ceremonies should be held closer to 8 AM. Why not hold them in the gym instead of the cafeteria?	1	5.56%
Class sizes, more opportunities for students to release energy in or out of the classroom	1	5.56%
Communication from teachers. All of them may not have the issue that our past 2nd grade teacher had. My child did very well on their grades, but I still would have liked to have had some communication and replies to my emails when I sent them. If the parents and teachers are not on the same page it makes it very hard.	1	5.56%
From a parent's perspective the classes seem to be grouped based on popularity of the teacher pitting the haves versus the have-nots. I would like to see this change.	1	5.56%
I would like to see an increase in the use of technology and the school's website by teachers for updates and classroom information. I like receiving paper notes and I check my children's folders each night, but I also like being able to go to the school website at any given time during the day and see a calendar or homework updates, etc. Not all grade levels updated their areas on a regular basis. I am very connected to technology throughout the day and that is helpful for me to check the site. I think that a school wide reading program would be wonderful as well. I know the students are involved in the AR reading program but promoting it more would be awesome. At a previous school, reading logs were required in the classroom at every grade level, but students were rewarded and encouraged so the whole experience was fun for them rather than perceived as a daunting task or challenging. An end of the year celebration was given at some grade levels and the students received a certificate and ribbon for reaching the specified goal during the year. The kids' pictures were placed on a wall in the school as they reached their goal of a million words.	1	5.56%
BES is known to be the best elementary school in the entire West Central Georgia region. Many families have moved to this area just so their children could attend this school. However, we are far from being the best that we can be. Important BES documents are almost never sent via e-mail or posted on the website. Other than the link to the Accelerated Reader website, the BES website has almost no relevant, useful, or timely information. The PTO, which is suppose to encourage parental involvement, has instead become a very elitist club that pushes parents away. When I read the question, "As a parent, I am familiar with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) and the GPS frameworks. The GPS outline and guide the content that is taught in my student's classroom.", I nearly laughed. Unless you are teaching that grade, no one knows what the GPS of a particular grade is. And not even the teachers or administrators can explain how they are developed. The reason parents don't show greater support for schools is because they feel that what happens in the school is driven more by state and local politics than by curriculum.	1	5.56%
More active learning projects in the lower grades. My second grader did not participate in any projects this year. This is unlike my 4th grader which did several projects in 2nd grade at another school in the county. I believe active learning is the best. It seemed to be very worksheet heavy in 2nd grade. Just not a big fan of over use of worksheets.	1	5.56%
More attention to after school interaction. Possible overbearing / borderline bully type. But my concerns are always addressed when reported. However, if there were more attention these would not happen to begin with.	1	5.56%
Bishop is growing each year. I think it is important to maintain a smaller class size that allows students to experience the individual attention that is needed at times in a classroom environment.	1	5.56%
One observation that I noticed this year from volunteering in the classroom is that it seems some teachers are over tasked. I loved my child's teacher but felt that more time could have been teaching and interacting with the children. But she was often pulled into meetings or on her computer fulfilling other school committee obligations. I understand that she did the best she could but feel that it took away from some important teaching and development opportunities. This bares no reflection on my opinion of the teacher but a reflection as to how the school perhaps assigns these addition responsibilities.	1	5.56%
Physical Education...I understand that Coach Perez is retiring this year and I hope that the new coach will be more involved w/the students. Coach Perez was not aware of what was going on w/his students. I had many complaints over the years w/him and to him, but I didn't see a change. I do know that when they had a student teacher earlier this year, the children loved him! He was very interactive w/them and taught them many things. Speech-Mr Conner....He is the nicest man and the children love him, BUT both of my children went to him and never improved. I took them to an independent therapist for speech.	1	5.56%
Please don't increase class size.	1	5.55%
PTO/PTA - where are the opportunities for the parents to come and meet the teachers(not just your teacher) and see what the different grades are doing. I remember going to the PTA meetings, seeing that project, drawing, paper on the wall that you can show your parents and be proud and then walking to the other classes and halls to see what the bigger kids were doing. PTA is about(or should be about) more than just fund raising!!! The PTO meeting last year lasted like 5 minutes. Here is how much money we made, what future funder raisers are panned and goodbye. The teachers do put projects up and down the halls and they are great, but when do the kids and parents get to see them? The teachers already do it, a PTA meeting to highlight it would be great! The afterschool program is not good. The students watch a lot of TV. It seems the teachers are grading papers or	1	5.56%

planning next weeks lessons instead of interacting with the kids. The past Afterschool Director had a schedule that included; art, games, outside play, gym, snack and homework time. Everyday the children are just sitting there with the backpacks on their backs at pick-up time. They use to be playing with "Table Toys" at this time. I use to see art come home. The ASEP seemed more "E" enriching before Ms. Brown.

Quality of food served in the lunchroom and cleanliness of the restrooms. Adding additional parapros.	1	5.56%
Technology -bring it more into the classrooms as another avenue for educating. -use email for communication. Provide staff emails for parents to use. -direct parents to the school website for events and news. -more computers. Keep software upgraded.	1	5.56%
The biggest improvement area would be dropping kids off. The traffic was horrible. There needs to be a cut thru road so that the parents that have Riverside students can cut thru and all others can go to 315 and turn. There were so many days my son was tardy due to us sitting in that line! And when you have kids to drop off at both schools it makes it even harder. Please consider this. Thank you.	1	5.56%
The only downside we experience this year was that Ms. Jennings had 4 children with varying levels of behavioral problems, possibly on the autism spectrum or ADHD. These children were very disruptive to the other kids, including a couple who are ADD and don't react well to constant harassment. Shiloh would brush it off, but a lot of the year the whole class suffered group punishment for one or two individuals acting out. This is not a socialist school, and the many should not be punished for the few. The teacher needs to be given the authority to send the student who is special-needs (autistic, add, whatever) to a different room or area anytime he/she is harming the learning opportunity of others. I have heard that the teacher can recommend special classes for a child but the parents can turn it down. That is detrimental both to the child with problems and the children who have to put up with those kids' issues and behavior. I don't fault Ms. Jennings for the group punishment, but I think if she didn't have to deal with having no authority she wouldn't be put in this predicament.	1	5.56%
Total	18	100.00%

Question 22 (Free response)
7 of 44 respondents answered this question.

Additional Comments?

	Number of Respondents	Percent
Ask the teachers to park on the back half of the front lot. This will help with the parents dropping off kids. I believe it will make the drop off safer for the children.	1	14.29%
Love the school and district!! Better than private school!!	1	14.29%
Bishop is a wonderful school and we are blessed to be a part of the Bishop family. :-) Justin and Jennifer Williams (Hunter Williams's Parents)	1	14.29%
Overall I am extremely pleased with Bishop. Also glad that the children have been given some time to talk during lunch. Socialization is an important part of growing and time needed to help them to control the impulse to talk during class.	1	14.29%
Overall, great school and can't wait to be there next year.	1	14.29%
Thank you for a great school year!	1	14.29%
Wish I could have had better communication with Mrs. Jennings. I was never even asked to bring in items for class parties by the room mom, and never felt like I was able to help in any way.	1	14.29%
Total	7	100.00%

Appendix H

Bishop Elementary Week at a Glance Form

First Grade

Subject Area	Topic/ Standard	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Reading	Story: *King Midas and His Gold* ELA1R6 c... Asks and answers questions about essential narrative elements of a read aloud or indep. read text EQ-*How does asking questions help readers understand the story?*	Shared reading: *Ugh! A Bug!* Introduce high frequency words for the week: pages 220-221 *came, could, gold, happy, made, night, saw, were* Read story using Think Central Introduce sight words	Shared reading: "In the Sand" *Big Book of Rhymes and Poems* Read pages 218-219 to discuss setting. Read story aloud and monitor comprehension.	Shared reading: "Contentment" *Big Book of Rhymes and Poems* Read pages 244-245 *Gold and Money* Discuss /compare texts p. 246 HF practice PB40	Take comprehension test. Test sight words. (COPIES)	Veterans Day NO School

for the week.

Spelling					
ELA1R3 b. applies knowledge of letter-sound correspondence to decode new words **ELA1W1 j.** begins to use common rules of spelling	Introduce new words: ***shop, shot, shut, rush, wish, fish, for, more, from, very*** -Distinguish btwn words with diagraph /sh & not usding SPB pg. 38(copies)	Choose one spelling word- use in a sentence & illustrate -SPB 39 (copies) to categorize words that begin with diagraph /sh and words that end in diagraoh /sh	Review words & play sparkle -SPB pg. 39 for extra practice (copies)	Spelling test ☺	X

Phonics	Diagraoh /sh & initial blends **ELA1R3 g.** uses spelling patterns to recognize words	Introduce the diagraph /sh using the word builder guide on T484 -Discuss each picture on Phonics practice book p.61 (pull) & do 62 independently	Use T499 as a guide to dictate several /sh words in sentences. Have the students underline the /sh word. -Phonics practice book p. 63 (pull) whole group & have the students read the sentences -Page 64 independently to asses understanding	Pull on transparency R23 on Interwrite/mimeo & have students read the sentences & underline the /sh words in context -Review the initial blends that have been learned (l,s,r,) & brainstorm words	Initial blends assessment: Extra support page 42 For extra practice: On level- practice book pg.42 Advanced- Challenge book page 42	X
Language & Grammar	**Nouns** Names for special places **ELA1W1** I. Uses correct capitalization of common proper nouns	Use LA transparency 23 to introduce special names for places. Brainstorm list of proper nouns that name places. Model writing a few sentences, and have students write their own.	Read "Senor Coyote, the Judge" folktale from Read Aloud Anthology p. 48 Follow T494 Teach/Model "Special Places" worksheet (copy)	GPB45 Read sentences aloud and have students underline proper nouns that name places. Rewrite correctly.	Assessment GPB47 and "Places" worksheet p11 (copy)	X

Math	**Unit 2** M1N1e. exchange equivalent quantities of coins by making fair trades; count out a combination of coins to buy an item up to one dollar. EQ-*How can we identify the values of various coins?*	Review graphic organizer (coins) Vocabulary Development p. 349A-quarter Lesson 18.5 Quarters Complete pages 349-350 if more practice is needed COPY Reteach 18.5 p.115 Eval: grade	Listen to Math Jingles #11 Lesson 18.6 Count with Quarters Complete pages 351-352 Alternate Activity: Advanced Learners TE p.351B (possible partners) indentify greatest/smallest value	Mimio Day/Interactive games http://www.beaconlearningcenter.com/WebLessons/CoinsForCandy/default.htm http://www.primarygames.com/Spending%20Spree/2b.htm	Complete pages 355-356 Eval: grade United Streaming: "If You Made a Million" (17:51)	X
Social Studies	**Unit Two: Our National Heritage** **SS1H2**: Students will read or listen to American folktales and explain how to characterize our national heritage. E.Q.: Who is Paul Bunyan?	Complete p. 18 Write About It! Choose between the folk heroes: Johnny Appleseed, John Henry, Annie Oakley, Davy Crockett Eval: grade	Introduce Paul Bunyan by reading *Paul Bunyan* by Kellogg (BES has two copies)- Bruce Complete page 16 Reading Comprehension comparing Paul Bunyan and John Henry (COPY)	read pages 32-33 from ALL TOGETHER (American Traditions) Complete pages 41-42 on Paul Bunyan (COPY) Eval: grade	United Streaming Videos: Literature for children: Tall Tales (9:11), Folktales from around the World: Paul Bunyan (11:21), Reading Rainbow: Paul Bunyan (27:51) features book by Kellogg	X